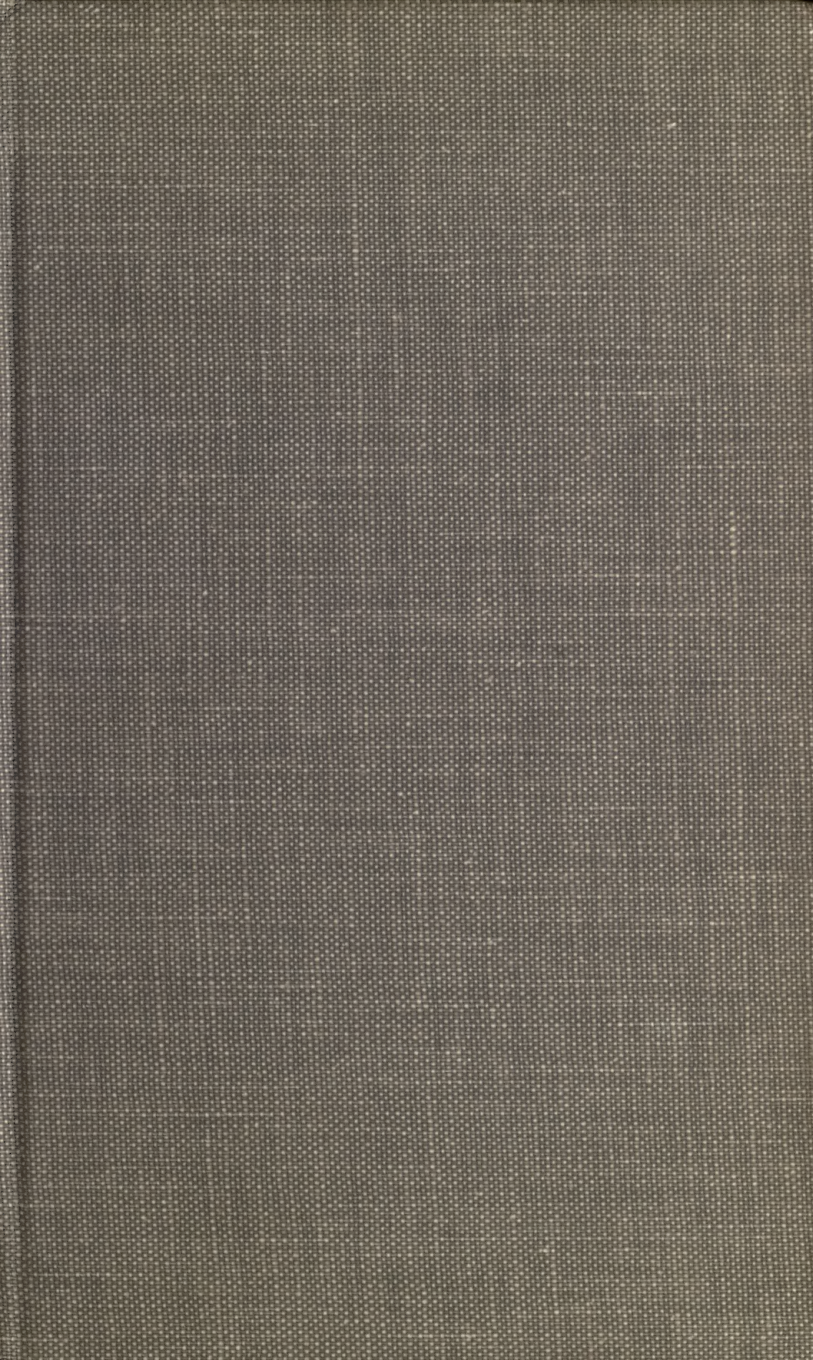






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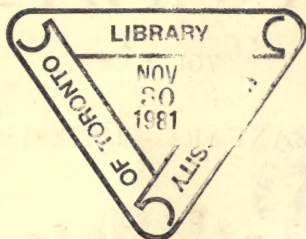
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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXIX.

JANUARY 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

OLD LADY MARY:

A STORY OF THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN.

I.

SHE was very old, and therefore it was very hard for her to make up her mind to die.

I am aware that this is not at all the general view, but that it is believed, as old age must be near death, that it prepares the soul for that inevitable event. It is not so, however, in many cases. In youth we are still so near the unseen out of which we came, that death is rather pathetic than tragic—a thing that touches all hearts, but to which, in many cases, the young hero accommodates himself sweetly and courageously. And amid the storms and burdens of middle life there are many times when we would fain push open the door that stands ajar, and behind which there is ease for all our pains, or at least rest, if nothing more. But Age, which has gone through both these phases, is apt, out of long custom and habit, to regard the matter from a different view. All

things that are violent have passed out of its life,—no more strong emotions, such as rend the heart—no great labours, bringing after them the weariness which is unto death, but the calm of an existence which is enough for its needs, which affords the moderate amount of comfort and pleasure for which its being is now adapted, and of which there seems no reason that there should ever be any end. To passion, to joy, to anguish, an end must come; but mere gentle living, determined by a framework of gentle rules and habits—why should that ever be ended? When a soul has got to this retirement and is content in it, it becomes very hard to die: hard to accept the necessity of dying, and to accustom one's self to the idea, and still harder to consent to carry it out.

The woman who is the subject of the following narrative was in this position. She had lived through

almost everything that is to be found in life. She had been beautiful in her youth, and had enjoyed all the triumphs of beauty; had been intoxicated with flattery, and triumphant in conquest, and mad with jealousy and the bitterness of defeat when it became evident that her day was over. She had never been a bad woman, or false, or unkind; but she had thrown herself with all her heart into those different stages of being, and had suffered as much as she enjoyed, according to the unfailing usage of life. Many a day during these storms and victories, when things went against her, when delights did not satisfy her, she had thrown out a cry into the wide air of the universe and wished to die. And then she had come to the higher table-land of life, and had borne all the spites of fortune,—had been poor and rich, and happy and sorrowful; had lost and won a hundred times over; had sat at feasts and kneeled by deathbeds, and followed her best-beloved to the grave, often, often crying out to God above to liberate her, to make an end of her anguish, for that her strength was exhausted and she could bear no more. But she had borne it and lived through all—and now had arrived at a time when all strong sensations are over, when the soul is no longer either triumphant or miserable, and when life itself, and comfort, and ease, and the warmth of the sun, and of the fireside, and the mild beauty of home were enough for her, and she required no more. That is, she required very little more,—a useful routine of hours and rules, a play of reflected emotion, a pleasant exercise of faculty, making her feel herself still capable of the best things in life—of interest in her fellow-creatures, kindness to them, and a little gentle intellec-

tual occupation, with books and men around. She had not forgotten anything in her life—not the excitements and delights of her beauty, nor love, nor grief, nor the higher levels she had touched in her day. She did not forget the dark day when her first-born was laid in the grave, nor that triumphant and brilliant climax of her life when every one pointed to her as the mother of a hero. All these things were like pictures hung in the secret chambers of her mind, to which she could go back in silent moments, in the twilight seated by the fire, or in the balmy afternoon, when languor and sweet thoughts are over the world. Sometimes at such moments there would be heard from her a faint sob, called forth, it was quite as likely, by the recollections of the triumph as by that of the deathbed. With these pictures to go back upon at her will she was never dull, but saw herself moving through the various scenes of her life with a continual sympathy, feeling for herself in all her troubles—sometimes approving, sometimes judging that woman who had been so pretty, so happy, so miserable, and had gone through everything that life can go through. How much that is looking back upon it! passages so hard that the wonder was how she could survive them—pangs so terrible that the heart would seem at its last gasp, but yet would revive and go on.

Besides these, however, she had many mild pleasures. She had a pretty house full of things which formed a graceful *entourage* suitable, as she felt, for such a woman as she was, and in which she took pleasure for their own beauty—soft chairs and couches, a fireplace and lights which were the perfection of tempered warmth and illumination. She had a carriage,

very comfortable and easy, in which, when the weather was suitable, she went out; and a pretty garden and lawns, in which, when she preferred staying at home, she could have her little walk or sit out under the trees. She had books in plenty, and all the newspapers and everything that was needful to keep her within the reflection of the busy life which she no longer cared to encounter in her own person. The post rarely brought her painful letters; for all those impassioned interests which bring pain had died out, and the sorrows of others, when they were communicated to her, gave her a luxurious sense of sympathy yet exemption. She was sorry for them; but such catastrophes could touch her no more: and often she had pleasant letters, which afforded her something to talk and think about, and discuss as if it concerned her—and yet did not concern her,—business which could not hurt her if it failed, which would please her if it succeeded. Her letters, her papers, her books, each coming at its appointed hour, were all instruments of pleasure. She came down-stairs at a certain hour, which she kept to as if it had been of the utmost importance, although it was of no importance at all: she took just so much good wine, so many cups of tea. Her repasts were as regular as clockwork—never too late, never too early. Her whole life went on velvet, rolling smoothly along, without jar or interruption, blameless, pleasant, kind. People talked of her old age as a model of old age, with no bitterness or sourness in it. And, indeed, why should she have been sour or bitter? It suited her far better to be kind. She was in reality kind to everybody, liking to see pleasant faces about her. The poor had no reason to complain of her; her servants

were very comfortable; and the one person in her house who was nearer to her own level, who was her companion and most important minister, was very comfortable too.

This was a young woman about twenty, a very distant relation, with “no claim,” everybody said, upon her kind mistress and friend—the daughter of a distant cousin. How very few think anything at all of such a tie! but Lady Mary had taken her young namesake when she was a child, and she had grown up as it were at her godmother’s footstool, in the conviction that the measured existence of the old was the rule of life, and that her own trifling personality counted for nothing, or next to nothing, in its steady progress. Her name was Mary too—always called “little Mary” as having once been little, and not yet very much in the matter of size. She was one of the pleasantest things to look at of all the pretty things in Lady Mary’s rooms, and she had the most sheltered, peaceful, and pleasant life that could be conceived. The only little thorn in her pillow was, that whereas in the novels, of which she read a great many, the heroines all go and pay visits and have adventures, she had none, but lived constantly at home. There was something much more serious in her life, had she known, which was that she had nothing, and no power of doing anything for herself; that she had all her life been accustomed to a modest luxury which would make poverty very hard to her; and that Lady Mary was over eighty, and had made no will. If she did not make any will, her property would all go to her grandson, who was so rich already that her fortune would be but as a drop in the ocean to him; or to some great-grandchildren of whom she knew very little—the descendants of a daughter long ago

dead who had married an Austrian, and who were therefore foreigners both in birth and name. That she should provide for little Mary was therefore a thing which nature demanded, and which would hurt nobody. She had said so often; but she deferred the doing of it as a thing for which there was "no hurry." For why should she die? There seemed no reason or need for it. So long as she lived, nothing could be more sure, more happy and serene, than little Mary's life; and why should she die? She did not perhaps put this into words; but the meaning of her smile, and the manner in which she put aside every suggestion about the chances of the hereafter away from her, said it more clearly than words. It was not that she had any superstitious fear about the making of a will. When the doctor or the vicar or her man of business, the only persons who ever talked to her on the subject, ventured periodically to refer to it, she assented pleasantly,—Yes, certainly, she must do it—some time or other.

"It is a very simple thing to do," the lawyer said. "I will save you all trouble; nothing but your signature will be wanted—and that you give every day."

"Oh, I should think nothing of the trouble!" she said.

"And it would liberate your mind from all care, and leave you free to think of things more important still," said the clergyman.

"I think I am very free of care," she replied.

Then the doctor added, bluntly, "And you will not die an hour the sooner for having made your will."

"Die!" said Lady Mary, surprised. And then she added, with a smile, "I hope you don't think so little of me as to believe I would be kept back by that?"

These gentlemen all consulted together in despair, and asked each other what should be done. They thought her an egotist—a cold-hearted old woman, holding at arm's-length any idea of the inevitable. And so she did; but not because she was cold-hearted—because she was so accustomed to living, and had survived so many calamities, and gone on so long—so long; and because everything was so comfortably arranged about her—all her little habits so firmly established, as if nothing could interfere with them. To think of the day arriving which should begin with some other formula than that of her maid's entrance drawing aside the curtains, lighting the cheerful fire, bringing her a report of the weather; and then the little tray, resplendent with snowy linen and shining silver and china, with its bouquet of violets or a rose in the season, the newspaper carefully dried and cut, the letters,—every detail was so perfect, so unchanging, regular as the morning. It seemed impossible that it should come to an end. And then when she came down-stairs, there were all the little articles upon her table always ready to her hand; a certain number of things to do, each at the appointed hour; the slender refreshments it was necessary for her to take, in which there was a little exquisite variety—but never any change in the fact that at eleven and at three and so forth something had to be taken. Had a woman wanted to abandon the peaceful life which was thus supported and carried on, the very framework itself would have resisted. It was impossible (almost) to contemplate the idea that at a given moment the whole machinery must stop. She was neither without heart nor without religion, but on

the contrary a good woman, to whom many gentle thoughts had been given at various portions of her career. But the occasion seemed to have passed for that as well as other kinds of emotion. The mere fact of living was enough for her. The little exertion which it was well she was required to make produced a pleasant weariness. It was a duty much enforced upon her by all around her, that she should do nothing which would exhaust or fatigue. "I don't want you to think," even the doctor would say; "you have done enough of thinking in your time." And this she accepted with great composure of spirit. She had thought and felt and done much in her day; but now everything of the kind was over. There was no need for her to fatigue herself; and day followed day, all warm and sheltered and pleasant. People died, it is true, now and then out of doors; but they were mostly young people, whose death might have been prevented had proper care been taken—who were seized with violent maladies, or caught sudden infections, or were cut down by accident—all which things seemed natural. Her own contemporaries were very few, and they were like herself—living on in something of the same way. At eighty-five all people under seventy are young; and one's contemporaries are very, very few.

Nevertheless these men did disturb her a little about her will. She had made more than one will in the former days during her active life; but all those to whom she had bequeathed her possessions were dead. She had survived them all, and inherited from many of them, which had been a hard thing in its time. One day the lawyer had been more than ordinarily pressing. He had told her stories of men who had

died intestate, and left trouble and penury behind them to those whom they would have most wished to preserve from all trouble. It would not have become Mr Furnival to say brutally to Lady Mary—"This is how you will leave your god-child when you die." But he told her story after story, many of them piteous enough.

"People think it is so troublesome a business," he said, "when it is nothing at all—the most easy matter in the world. We are getting so much less particular nowadays about formalities. So long as the testator's intentions are made quite apparent—that is the chief matter, and a very bad thing for us lawyers."

"I daresay," said Lady Mary, "it is unpleasant for a man to think of himself as 'the testator.' It is a very abstract title, when you come to think of it."

"Pooh!" said Mr Furnival, who had no sense of humour.

"But if this great business is so very simple," she went on, "one could do it, no doubt, for one's self?"

"Many people do—but it is never advisable," said the lawyer. "You will say it is natural for me to tell you that. When they do, it should be as simple as possible. I give all my real property, or my personal property, or my shares in so-and-so, or my jewels, or so forth, to—whomever it may be. The fewer words the better, so that nobody may be able to read between the lines, you know; and the signature attested by two witnesses; but they must not be witnesses that have any interest—that is, that have anything left to them by the document they witness."

Lady Mary put up her hand defensively, with a laugh. It was still a most delicate hand, like ivory, a little yellowed with age,

but fine, the veins standing out a little upon it, the finger-tips still pink. "You speak," she said, "as if you expected me to take the law in my own hands. No, no, my old friend; never fear, you shall have the doing of it."

"Whenever you please, my dear lady—whenever you please. Such a thing cannot be done an hour too soon. Shall I take your instructions now?"

Lady Mary laughed, and said, "You were always a very keen man for business. I remember your father used to say, Robert would never neglect an opening."

"No," he said, with a peculiar look. "I have always looked after mysix-and-eightpences; and in that case it is true the pounds take care of themselves."

"Very good care," said Lady Mary; and then she bade her young companion bring that book she had been reading, where there was something she wanted to show Mr Furnival. "It is only a case in a novel—but I am sure it is bad law; give me your opinion," she said.

He was obliged to be civil, very civil. Nobody is rude to the Lady Marys of life; and besides, she was old enough to have an additional right to every courtesy. But while he sat over the novel, and tried with unnecessary vehemence to make her see what very bad law it was, and glanced from her smiling attention to the innocent sweetness of the girl beside her, who was her loving attendant, the good man's heart was sore. He said many hard things of her in his own mind as he went away.

"She will die," he said, bitterly. "She will go off in a moment when nobody is looking for it, and that poor child will be left destitute."

It was all he could do not to go

back and take her by her fragile old shoulders and force her to sign and seal at once. But then he knew very well that as soon as he found himself in her presence, he would of necessity be obliged to subdue his impatience, and be once more civil, very civil, and try to suggest and insinuate the duty which he dared not force upon her. And it was very clear that till she pleased she would take no hint. He supposed it must be that strange reluctance to part with their power which is said to be common to old people, or else that horror of death, and determination to keep it at arm's-length, which is also common. Thus he did as spectators are so apt to do, he forced a meaning and motive into what had no motive at all, and imagined Lady Mary, the kindest of women, to be of purpose and intention risking the future of the girl whom she had brought up, and whom she loved—not with passion, indeed, or anxiety, but with tender benevolence: a theory which was as false as any theory could be.

That evening in her room, Lady Mary, in a very cheerful mood, sat by a little bright unnecessary fire, with her writing-book before her, waiting till she should be sleepy. It was the only point in which she was a little hard upon her maid, who in every other respect was the best-treated of servants. Lady Mary, as it happened, had often no inclination for bed till the night was far advanced. She slept little, as is common enough at her age. She was in her warm wadded dressing-gown, an article in which she still showed certain traces (which were indeed visible in all she wore) of her ancient beauty, with her white hair becomingly arranged under a cap of cambric and lace. At the last moment, when she had

been ready to step into bed, she had changed her mind, and told Jervis that she would write a letter or two first. And she had written her letters, but still felt no inclination to sleep. Then there fluttered across her memory somehow the conversation she had held with Mr Furnival in the morning. It would be amusing, she thought, to cheat him out of some of those six-and-eightpences he pretended to think so much of. It would be still more amusing, next time the subject of her will was recurred to, to give his arm a little tap with her fan, and say, "Oh, that is all settled, months ago." She laughed to herself at this, and took out a fresh sheet of paper. It was a little jest that pleased her.

"Do you think there is any one up yet, Jervis, except you and me?" she said to the maid. Jervis hesitated a little, and then said that she believed Mr Brown had not gone to bed yet: for he had been going over the cellar, and was making up his accounts. Jervis was so explanatory that her mistress divined what was meant. "I suppose I have been spoiling sport, keeping you here," she said, good-humouredly; for it was well known that Miss Jervis and Mr Brown were engaged, and that they were only waiting (everybody knew but Lady Mary, who never suspected it) the death of their mistress to set up a lodging-house in Jermyn Street, where they fully intended to make their fortune. "Then go," Lady Mary said, "and call Brown. I have a little business paper to write, and you must both witness my signature." She laughed to herself a little as she said this, thinking how she would steal a march on Mr Furnival. "I give and bequeath," she said to herself playfully, after Jervis

had hurried away. She fully intended to leave both of these good servants something, but then she recollected that people who are interested in a will cannot sign as witnesses. "What does it matter?" she said to herself gaily; "if it should ever be wanted, Mary would see to that." Accordingly she dashed off in her pretty old-fashioned handwriting, which was very angular and pointed, as was the fashion in her day, and still very clear, though slightly tremulous, a few lines, in which, remembering playfully Mr Furnival's recommendation of "few words," she left to little Mary all she possessed, adding, by the prompting of that recollection about the witnesses, "She will take care of the servants." It filled one side only of the large sheet of note-paper, which was what Lady Mary habitually used. Brown, introduced timidly by Jervis, and a little overawed by the solemnity of the bedchamber, came in and painted solidly his large signature after the spidery lines of his mistress. She had folded down the paper, so that neither saw what it was.

"Now I will go to bed," Lady Mary said, when Brown had left the room. "And Jervis, you must go to bed too."

"Yes, my lady," said Jervis.

"I don't approve of courtship at this hour."

"No, my lady," Jervis replied, deprecating and disappointed.

"Why cannot he tell his tale in daylight?"

"Oh, my lady, there's no tale to tell," cried the maid. "We are not of the gossiping sort, my lady, neither me nor Mr Brown." Lady Mary laughed, and watched while the candles were put out: the fire made a pleasant flicker in the room—it was autumn and still warm, and it was "for company"

and cheerfulness that the little fire was lit ; she liked to see it dancing and flickering upon the walls,—and then closed her eyes amid an exquisite softness of comfort and luxury, life itself bearing her up as softly, filling up all crevices as warmly, as the downy pillow upon which she rested her still beautiful old head.

If she had died that night ! The little sheet of paper that meant so much lay openly, innocently, in her writing-book, along with the letters she had written, and looking of as little importance as they. There was nobody in the world who grudged old Lady Mary one of those pretty placid days of hers. Brown and Jervis, if they were sometimes a little impatient, consoled each other that they were both sure of something in her will, and that in the meantime it was a very good place. And all the rest would have been very well content that Lady Mary should live for ever. But how wonderfully it would have simplified everything, and how much trouble and pain it would have saved to everybody, herself included, could she have died that night !

But naturally there was no question of dying on that night. When she was about to go down-stairs next day, Lady Mary, giving her letters to be posted, saw the paper which she had forgotten lying beside them. She had forgotten all about it, but the sight of it made

her smile. She folded it up and put it in an envelope while Jervis went down-stairs with the letters ; and then, to carry out her joke, she looked round her to see where she would put it. There was an old Italian cabinet in the room with a secret drawer, which it was a little difficult to open, almost impossible for any one who did not know the secret. Lady Mary looked round her, smiled, hesitated a little, and then walked across the room and put the envelope in the secret drawer. She was still fumbling with it when Jervis came back, but there was no connection in Jervis's mind then, or ever after, between the paper she had signed and this old cabinet, which was one of the old lady's toys. She arranged Lady Mary's shawl, which had dropped off her shoulders a little in her unusual activity, and took up her book and her favourite cushion, and all the little paraphernalia that moved with her, and gave her lady her arm to go down-stairs ; where little Mary had placed her chair just at the right angle, and arranged the little table, on which there were so many little necessities and conveniences, and was standing smiling, the prettiest object of all, the climax of the gentle luxury and pleasantness, to receive her god-mother, who had been her providence all her life.

But what a pity ! oh, what a pity, that she had not died that night !

II.

Life went on after this without any change. There was never any change in that delightful house ; and if it was years or months, or even days, the youngest of its inhabitants could scarcely tell, and Lady Mary could not tell at all. This was one of her little imper-

fections—a little mist which hung like the lace about her head over her memory. She could not remember how time went, or that there was any difference between one day and another. There were Sundays, it was true, which made a kind of gentle measure of the

progress of time; but she said, with a smile, that she thought it was always Sunday—they came so close upon each other. And Time flew on gentle wings, that made no sound and left no reminders. She had her little ailments like anybody, but in reality less than anybody, seeing there was nothing to fret her, nothing to disturb the even tenor of her days. Still there were times when she took a little cold, or got a chill, in spite of all precautions, as she went from one room to another. She came to be one of the marvels of the time—an old lady who had seen everybody worth seeing for generations back—who remembered as distinctly as if they had happened yesterday, great events that had taken place before the present age began at all, before the great statesmen of our time were born. And in full possession of all her faculties, as everybody said, her mind as clear as ever, her intelligence as active, reading everything, interested in everything, and still beautiful in extreme old age. Everybody about her, and in particular all the people who helped to keep the thorns from her path, and felt themselves to have a hand in her preservation, were proud of Lady Mary: and she was perhaps a little, a very little, delightfully, charmingly proud of herself. The doctor, beguiled by professional vanity, feeling what a feather she was in his cap, quite confident that she would reach her hundredth birthday, and with an ecstatic hope that even, by grace of his admirable treatment and her own beautiful constitution she might (almost) solve the problem and live for ever, gave up troubling about the will which at a former period he had taken so much interest in. “What is the use?” he said; “she will see us

all out.” And the vicar, though he did not give in to this, was overawed by the old lady, who knew everything that could be taught her, and to whom it seemed an impertinence to utter common-places about duty, or even to suggest subjects of thought. Mr Furnival was the only man who did not cease his representations, and whose anxiety about the young Mary, who was so blooming and sweet in the shadow of the old, did not decrease. But the recollection of the bit of paper in the secret drawer of the cabinet, fortified his old client against all his attacks. She had intended it only as a jest, with which some day or other to confound him, and show how much wiser she was than he supposed. It became quite a pleasant subject of thought to her, at which she laughed to herself. Some day, when she had a suitable moment, she would order him to come with all his formalities, and then produce her bit of paper, and turn the laugh against him. But oddly, the very existence of that little document kept her indifferent even to the laugh. It was too much trouble; she only smiled at him, and took no more notice, amused to think how astonished he would be—when, if ever, he found it out.

It happened, however, that one day in the early winter the wind changed when Lady Mary was out for her drive: at least they all vowed the wind changed. It was in the south, that genial quarter, when she set out, but turned about in some uncomfortable way, and was a keen north-easter when she came back. And in the moment of stepping from the carriage she caught a chill. It was the coachman’s fault, Jervis said, who allowed the horses to make a step forward when Lady Mary was getting out, and kept her exposed, standing on

the step of the carriage, while he pulled them up; and it was Jervis's fault, the footman said, who was not clever enough to get her lady out, or even to throw a shawl round her, when she perceived how the weather had changed. It is always some one's fault, or some unforeseen unprecedented change, that does it at the last. Lady Mary was not accustomed to be ill, and did not bear it with her usual grace. She was a little impatient at first, and thought they were making an unnecessary fuss. But then there passed a few uncomfortable feverish days, when she began to look forward to the doctor's visit as the only thing there was any comfort in. Afterwards she passed a night of a very agitating kind. She dozed and dreamed, and awoke and dreamed again. Her life seemed all to run into dreams—a

strange confusion was about her, through which she could define nothing. Once waking up, as she supposed, she saw a group round her bed, the doctor with a candle in his hand, (how should the doctor be there in the middle of the night?) holding her hand or feeling her pulse: little Mary at one side crying—why should the child cry? and Jervis very anxious, pouring something into a glass. There were other faces there which she was sure must have come out of a dream, so unlikely was it that they should be collected in her bed-chamber; and all with a sort of halo of feverish light about them, a magnified and mysterious importance. This strange scene, which she did not understand, seemed to make itself visible all in a moment out of the darkness, and then disappeared again as suddenly as it came.

III.

When she woke again it was morning; and her first waking consciousness was, that she must be much better. The choking sensation in her throat was altogether gone. She had no desire to cough—no difficulty in breathing. She had a fancy, however, that she must be still dreaming, for she felt sure that some one had called her by her name, "Mary." Now all who could call her by her Christian name were dead years ago—therefore it must be a dream. However, in a short time it was repeated,—“Mary, Mary! get up; there is a great deal to do.” This voice confused her greatly. Was it possible that all that was past had been mere fancy; that she had but dreamed those long, long years—maturity and motherhood, and trouble and triumph, and old age at the end of all? It seemed to

her possible that she might have dreamed the rest, for she had been a girl much given to visions; but she said to herself that she never could have dreamed old age. And then with a smile she mused and thought that it must be the voice that was a dream; for how could she get up without Jervis, who had never appeared yet to draw the curtains or make the fire? Jervis perhaps had sat up late. She remembered now to have seen her that time in the middle of the night by her bedside, so that it was natural enough, poor thing, that she should be late. Get up! who was it that was calling to her so. She had not been so called to, she who had always been a great lady, since she was a girl by her mother's side. “Mary, Mary!” It was a very curious dream. And what was more curious still was,

that by-and-by she could not keep still any longer, but got up without thinking any more of Jervis, and going out of her room came all at once into the midst of a company of people all very busy—whom she was much surprised to find at first, but whom she soon accustomed herself to, finding the greatest interest in their proceedings, and curious to know what they were doing. They, for their part, did not seem at all surprised by her appearance, nor did any one stop to explain, as would have been natural; but she took this with great composure, somewhat astonished perhaps, being used, wherever she went, to a great many observances and much respect, but soon, very soon, becoming used to it. Then some one repeated what she had heard before. "It was time you got up—for there is a great deal to do."

"To do," she said, "for me?" and then she looked round upon them with that charming smile which had subjugated so many. "I am afraid," she said, "you will find me of very little use. I am too old now, if ever I could have done much, for work."

"Oh no, you are not old,—you will do very well," some one said.

"Not old!"—Lady Mary felt a little offended in spite of herself. "Perhaps I like flattery as well as my neighbours," she said with dignity, "but then it must be reasonable. To say I am anything but a very old woman——"

Here she paused a little, perceiving for the first time with surprise that she was standing and walking without her stick or the help of any one's arm, quite freely and at her ease, and that the place in which she was had expanded into a great place like a gallery in a palace, instead of the room next her own into which she had walked a few minutes ago; but this dis-

covery did not at all affect her mind, or occupy her except with the most passing momentary surprise.

"The fact is, I feel a great deal better and stronger," she said.

"Quite well, Mary, and stronger than ever you were before?"

"Who is it that calls me Mary? I have had nobody for a long time to call me Mary; the friends of my youth are all dead. I think that you must be right, although the doctor, I feel sure, thought me very bad last night. I should have got alarmed if I had not fallen asleep again."

"And then woke up well?"

"Quite well: it is wonderful, but quite true. You seem to know a great deal about me?"

"I know everything about you. You have had a very pleasant life, and do you think you have made the best of it? Your old age has been very pleasant."

"Ah! you acknowledge that I am old, then?" cried Lady Mary, with a smile.

"You are old no longer, and you are a great lady no longer. Don't you see that something has happened to you? It is seldom that such a great change happens without being found out."

"Yes; it is true I have got better all at once. I feel an extraordinary renewal of strength. I seem to have left home without knowing it; none of my people seem near me. I feel very much as if I had just awakened from a long dream. Is it possible," she said, with a wondering look, "that I have dreamed all my life, and after all am just a girl at home?" The idea was ludicrous, and she laughed. "You see I am very much improved indeed," she said.

She was still so far from perceiving the real situation, that some one came towards her out of the group

of people about—some one whom she recognised—with the evident intention of explaining to her how it was. She started a little at the sight of him, and held out her hand, and cried : “ You here ! I am very glad to see you—doubly glad, since I was told a few days ago that you had—died.”

There was something in this word as she herself pronounced it that troubled her a little. She had never been one of those who are afraid of death. On the contrary, she had always taken a great interest in it, and liked to hear everything that could be told her on the subject. It gave her now, however, a curious little thrill of sensation, which she did not understand : she hoped it was not superstition.

“ You have guessed rightly,” he said—“ quite right. That is one of the words with a false meaning, which is to us a mere symbol of something we cannot understand. But you see what it means now.”

It was a great shock, it need not be concealed. Otherwise she had been quite pleasantly occupied with the interest of something new, into which she had walked so easily out of her own bedchamber, without any trouble, and with the delightful new sensation of health and strength. But when it flashed upon her that she was not to go back to her bedroom again, nor have any of those cares and attentions which had seemed necessary to existence, she was very much startled and shaken. Died ! Was it possible that she personally had died ? She had known it was a thing that happened to everybody ; but yet.—And it was a solemn matter, to be prepared for, and looked forward to, whereas—— “ If you mean that I too——” she said, faltering a

little ; and then she added, “ it is very surprising,” with a trouble in her mind which yet was not all trouble. “ If that is so, it is a thing well over. And it is very wonderful how much disturbance people give themselves about it—if this is all.”

“ This is not all, however,” her friend said ; “ you have an ordeal before you which you will not find pleasant. You are going to think about your life, and all that was imperfect in it, and which might have been done better.”

“ We are none of us perfect,” said Lady Mary, with a little of that natural resentment with which one hears one’s self accused—however ready one may be to accuse one’s self.

“ Permit me,” said he, and took her hand and led her away without further explanation. The people about were so busy with their own occupations, that they took very little notice ; neither did she pay much attention to the manner in which they were engaged. Their looks were friendly when they met her eye, and she too felt friendly, with a sense of brotherhood. But she had always been a kind woman. She wanted to step aside and help, on more than one occasion, when it seemed to her that some people in her way had a task above their powers ; but this her conductor would not permit. And she endeavoured to put some questions to him as they went along with still less success.

“ The change is very confusing,” she said ; “ one has no standard to judge by. I should like to know something about—the kind of people—and the—manner of life.”

“ For a time,” he said, “ you will have enough to do, without troubling yourself about that.”

This naturally produced an uneasy sensation in her mind. “ I

suppose," she said rather timidly, "that we are not in—what we have been accustomed to call heaven?"

"That is a word," he said, "which expresses rather a condition than a place."

"But there must be a place—in which that condition can exist." She had always been fond of discussions of this kind, and felt encouraged to find that they were still practicable. "It cannot be the—Inferno, that is clear at least," she added with the sprightliness which was one of her characteristics; "perhaps—Purgatory? since you infer that I have something to endure."

"Words are interchangeable," he said: "that means one thing to one of us which to another has a totally different signification." There was something so like his old self in this, that she laughed with an irresistible sense of amusement.

"You were always fond of the oracular," she said. She was conscious that on former occasions, if he had made such a speech to her, though she would have felt the same amusement, she would not

have expressed it so frankly. But he did not take it at all amiss. And her thoughts went on in other directions. She felt herself saying over to herself the words of the old north-country dirge, which came to her recollection she knew not how—

"If hosen and shoon thou gavest nane,
The whins shall prick thee intill the
bane."

When she saw that her companion heard her, she asked, "Is that true?"

He shook his head a little. "It is too matter of fact," he said, "as I need hardly tell you. Hosen and shoon are good, but they do not always sufficiently indicate the state of the heart."

Lady Mary had a consciousness, which was pleasant to her, that so far as the hosen and shoon went, she had abundant means of preparing herself for the pricks of any road, however rough; but she had no time to indulge this pleasing reflection, for she was shortly introduced into a great building full of innumerable rooms, in one of which her companion left her.

IV.

The door opened, and she felt herself free to come out. How long she had been there, or what passed there, is not for any one to say. She came out tingling and smarting—if such words can be used—with an intolerable recollection of the last act of her life. So intolerable was it that all that had gone before, and all the risings up of old errors and visions long dead, were forgotten in the sharp and keen prick of this, which was not over and done like the rest. No one had accused her, or brought before her Judge the things that

were against her. She it was who had done it all—she whose memory did not spare her one fault, who remembered everything. But when she came to that last frivolity of her old age, and saw for the first time how she had played with the future of the child whom she had brought up, and abandoned to the hardest fate—for nothing, for folly, for a jest—the horror and bitterness of the thought filled her mind to overflowing. In the first anguish of that recollection she had to go forth, receiving no word of comfort in respect to it, meeting only with

a look of sadness and compassion, which went to her very heart. She came forth as if she had been driven away, but not by any outward influence, by the force of her own miserable sensations. "I will write," she said to herself, "and tell them—I will go——" And then she stopped short, remembering that she could neither go nor write—that all communication with the world she had left was closed. Was it all closed? Was there no way in which a message could reach those who remained behind? She caught the first passer-by whom she passed, and addressed him piteously. "Oh, tell me—you have been longer here than I—cannot one send a letter, a message, if it were only a single word?"

"Where?" he said, stopping and listening; so that it began to seem possible to her that some such expedient might still be within her reach.

"It is to England," she said, thinking he meant to ask as to which quarter of the world.

"Ah," he said, shaking his head, "I fear that is impossible."

"But it is to set something right, which out of mere inadvertence, with no ill meaning——" No, no (she repeated to herself), no ill meaning—none! "Oh sir, for charity! tell me how I can find a way. There must—there must be some way."

He was greatly moved by the sight of her distress. "I am but a stranger here," he said; "I may be wrong. There are others who can tell you better; but"—and he shook his head sadly—"most of us would be so thankful, if we could, to send a word, if it were only a single word, to those we have left behind, that I fear, I fear——"

"Ah!" cried Lady Mary, "but that would be only for tenderness; whereas this is for justice and for

pity, and to do away with a great wrong which I did before I came here."

"I am very sorry for you," he said; but shook his head once more as he went away. She was more careful next time, and chose one who had the look of much experience and knowledge of the place. He listened to her very gravely, and answered Yes, that he was one of the officers, and could tell her whatever she wanted to know; but when she told him what she wanted, he too shook his head. "I do not say it cannot be done," he said. "There are some cases in which it has been successful, but very few. It has often been attempted. There is no law against it. Those who do it do it at their own risk. They suffer much, and almost always they fail."

"No, oh no. You said there were some who succeeded. No one can be more anxious than I. I will give—anything—everything I have in the world!——"

He gave her a smile, which was very grave nevertheless, and full of pity. "You forget," he said, "that you have nothing to give; and if you had, that there is no one here to whom it would be of any value."

Though she was no longer old and weak, yet she was still a woman, and she began to weep, in the terrible failure and contrariety of all things; but yet she would not yield. She cried: "There must be some one here who would do it for love. I have had people who loved me in my time. I must have some here who have not forgotten. Ah! I know what you would say. I lived so long I forgot them all, and why should they remember me?"

Here she was touched on the arm, and looking round, saw close to her the face of one whom, it was

very true, she had forgotten. She remembered him but dimly, after she had looked long at him. A little group had gathered about her, with grieved looks, to see her distress. He who had touched her was the spokesman of them all.

"There is nothing I would not do," he said, "for you and for love." And then they all sighed, surrounding her, and added, "But it is impossible—impossible!"

She stood and gazed at them, recognising by degrees faces that she knew, and seeing in all that look of grief and sympathy which makes all human souls brothers. Impossible was not a word that had been often said to be in her life; and to come out of a world in which everything could be changed, everything communicated in the twinkling of an eye, and find a dead blank before her and around her, through which not a word could go, was more terrible than can be said in words. She looked piteously upon them, with that anguish of helplessness which goes to every heart, and cried, "What is impossible? To send a word—only a word—to set right what is wrong? Oh, I understand," she said, lifting up her hands. "I understand! that to send messages of comfort must not be; that the people who love you must bear it, as we all have done in our time, and trust to God for consolation. But I have done a wrong! Oh, listen, listen to me, my friends. I have left a child, a young creature, unprovided for—without any one to help her. And must that be? Must she bear it, and I bear it, for ever, and no means, no way of setting it right? Listen to me! I was there last night,—in the middle of the night I was still there,—and here this morning. So it must be easy to come—only a short way; and two words would be enough,—only two words!"

They gathered closer and closer round her, full of compassion. "It is easy to come," they said, "but not to go."

And one added, "It will not be for ever; comfort yourself. When she comes here, or to a better place, that will seem to you only as a day."

"But to her," cried Lady Mary,—"to her it will be long years—it will be trouble and sorrow; and she will think I took no thought for her: and she will be right," the penitent said, with a great and bitter cry.

It was so terrible that they were all silent, and said not a word; except the man who had loved her, who put his hand upon her arm, and said, "We are here for that; this is the fire that purges us,—to see at last what we have done, and the true aspect of it, and to know the cruel wrong, yet never be able to make amends."

She remembered then that this was a man who had neglected all lawful affections, and broken the hearts of those who trusted him for her sake; and for a moment she forgot her own burden in sorrow for his.

It was now that he who had called himself one of the officers came forward again,—for the little crowd had gathered round her so closely that he had been shut out. He said, "No one can carry your message for you; that is not permitted. But there is still a possibility. You may have permission to go yourself. Such things have been done, though they have not often been successful. But if you will——"

She shivered when she heard him; and it became apparent to her why no one could be found to go,—for all her nature revolted from that step which it was evident must be the most terrible which

could be thought of. She looked at him with troubled, beseeching eyes, and the rest all looked at her, pitying and trying to soothe her.

"Permission will not be refused," he said, "for a worthy cause."

Upon which the others all spoke together, entreating her. "Already," they cried, "they have forgotten you living. You are to them one who is dead. They will be afraid of you if they can see you. Oh, go not back! Be content to wait—to wait; it is only a little while. The life of man is nothing; it appears for a little time, and then it vanishes away. And when she comes here she will know—or in a better place." They sighed as they named the better place; though some smiled too, feeling perhaps more near to it.

Lady Mary listened to them all, but she kept her eyes upon the face of him who offered her this possibility. There passed through her mind a hundred stories she had heard of those who had *gone back*. But not one that spoke of them as welcome, as received with joy, as comforting those they loved. Ah no! was it not rather a curse upon the house to which they came? The rooms were shut up, the houses abandoned, where they were supposed to appear. Those whom they had loved best feared and fled them. They were a vulgar wonder,—a thing that the poorest laughed at, yet feared. Poor banished souls! it was because no one would listen to them that they had to linger and wait, and come and go. She shivered, and, in spite of her long-

ing and her repentance, a cold dread and horror took possession of her. She looked round upon her companions for comfort, and found none.

"Do not go," they said; "do not go. We have endured like you. We wait till all things are made clear."

And another said, "All will be made clear. It is but for a time."

She turned from one to another, and back again to the first speaker, —he who had authority.

He said, "It is very rarely successful; it retards the course of your penitence. It is an indulgence, and it may bring harm and not good; but if the meaning is generous and just, permission will be given, and you may go."

Then all the strength of her nature rose in her. She thought of the child forsaken, and of the dark world round her, where she would find so few friends; and of the home shut up in which she had lived her young and pleasant life; and of the thoughts that must rise in her heart, as though she were forsaken and abandoned of God and man. Then Lady Mary turned to the man who had authority. She said, "If He whom I saw to-day will give me His blessing, I will go——" and they all pressed round her, weeping and kissing her hands.

"He will not refuse His blessing," they said; "but the way is terrible, and you are still weak. How can you encounter all the misery of it? He commands no one to try that dark and dreadful way."

"I will try," Lady Mary said.

V.

The night which Lady Mary had been conscious of, in a momentary glimpse full of the exaggeration of fever, had not indeed been so expe-

ditious as she believed. The doctor, it is true, had been pronouncing her death-warrant when she saw him holding her wrist and

wondered what he did there in the middle of the night; but she had been very ill before this, and the conclusion of her life had been watched with many tears. Then there had risen up a wonderful commotion in the house, of which little Mary, her godchild, was very little sensible. Had she left any will, any instructions, the slightest indication of what she wished to be done after her death? Mr Furnival, who had been very anxious to be allowed to see her, even in the last days of her illness, said emphatically, No. She had never executed any will, never made any disposition of her affairs, he said, almost with bitterness, in the tone of one who is ready to weep with vexation and distress. The vicar took a more hopeful view. He said it was impossible that so considerate a person could have done this, and that there must, he was sure, be found somewhere, if close examination was made, a memorandum, a letter—something which should show what she wished; for she must have known very well, notwithstanding all flatteries and compliments upon her good looks, that from day to day her existence was never to be calculated upon. The doctor did not share this last opinion. He said that there was no fathoming the extraordinary views that people took of their own case; and that it was quite possible, though it seemed incredible, that Lady Mary might really be as little expectant of death, on the way to ninety, as a girl of seventeen; but still he was of opinion that she might have left a memorandum somewhere. These three gentlemen were in the foreground of affairs; because she had no relations to step in and take the management. The Earl, her grandson, was abroad, and there were only his solicitors to interfere

on his behalf—men to whom Lady Mary's fortune was quite unimportant, although it was against their principles to let anything slip out of their hands that could aggrandise their client; but who knew nothing about the circumstances—about little Mary, about the old lady's peculiarities, in any way. Therefore the persons who had surrounded her in her life, and Mr Furnival, her man of business, were the persons who really had the management of everything. Their wives interfered a little too, or rather the one wife who only could do so—the wife of the vicar, who came in beneficently at once, and took poor little Mary, in her first desolation, out of the melancholy house. Mrs Vicar did this without any hesitation, knowing very well that, in all probability, Lady Mary had made no will, and consequently that the poor girl was destitute. A great deal is said about the hardness of the world, and the small consideration that is shown for a destitute dependant in such circumstances. But this is not true; and, as a matter of fact, there is never, or very rarely, such profound need in the world, without a great deal of kindness and much pity. The three gentlemen all along had been entirely in Mary's interest. They had not expected legacies from the old lady, or any advantage to themselves. It was of the girl that they had thought. And when now they examined everything and inquired into all her ways and what she had done, it was of Mary they were thinking. But Mr Furnival was very certain of his point. He knew that Lady Mary had made no will; time after time he had pressed it upon her. He was very sure, even while he examined her writing-table, and turned out all the drawers, that nothing would be

found. The little Italian cabinet had *chiffons* in its drawers, fragments of old lace, pieces of ribbon, little nothings of all sorts. Nobody thought of the secret drawer ; and if they had thought of it, where could a place have been found less likely ? If she had ever made a will, she could have had no reason for concealing it. To be sure they did not reason in this way, being simply unaware of any place of concealment at all. And Mary knew nothing about this search they were making. She did not know how she was herself "left." When the first misery of grief was exhausted, she began, indeed, to have troubled thoughts in her own mind, — to expect that the vicar would speak to her, or Mr Furnival send for her, and tell her what she was to do. But nothing was said to her. The vicar's wife had asked her to come for a long visit ; and the anxious people, who were for ever talking over this subject and consulting what was best for her, had come to no decision as yet, as to what must be said to the person chiefly concerned. It was too heartrending to have to put the real state of affairs before her.

The doctor had no wife ; but he had an anxious mother, who, though she would not for the world have been unkind to the poor girl, yet was very anxious that she should be disposed of and out of her son's way. It is true that the doctor was forty and Mary only eighteen, — but what then ? Matches of that kind were seen every day, and his heart was so soft to the child that his mother never knew from one day to another what might happen. She had naturally no doubt at all that Mary would seize the first hand held out to her, and as time went on held many an anxious consultation with the vicar's wife on the subject. "You cannot

have her with you for ever," she said. "She must know one time or another how she is left, and that she must learn to do something for herself."

"Oh," said the vicar's wife, "how is she to be told ? It is heartrending to look at her and to think, — nothing but luxury all her life, and now, in a moment, destitution. I am very glad to have her with me ; she is a dear little thing, and so nice with the children. And if some good man would only step in——"

The doctor's mother trembled ; for that a good man should step in was exactly what she feared. "That is a thing that can never be depended upon," she said ; "and marriages made out of compassion are just as bad as mercenary marriages. Oh no, my dear Mrs Bowyer, Mary has a great deal of character. You should put more confidence in her than that. No doubt she will be much cast down at first, but when she knows, she will rise to the occasion and show what is in her."

"Poor little thing ! what is in a girl of eighteen, and one that has lain on the roses and fed on the lilies all her life ? Oh, I could find it in my heart to say a great deal about old Lady Mary that would not be pleasant ! Why did she bring her up so if she did not mean to provide for her ? I think she must have been at heart a wicked old woman."

"Oh no—we must not say that. I daresay, as my son says, she always meant to do it some time——"

"Some time ! how long did she expect to live, I wonder ?"

"Well," said the doctor's mother, "it is wonderful how little old one feels sometimes within one's self, even when one is well up in years." She was of the faction of the old, instead of being like Mrs

Bowyer, who was not much over thirty, of the faction of the young. She could make excuses for Lady Mary; but she thought that it was unkind to bring the poor little girl here in ignorance of her real position, and in the way of men—who, though old enough to know better, were still capable of folly, as what man is not when a girl of eighteen is concerned? “I hope,” she added, “that the Earl will do something for her. Certainly he ought to, when he knows all that his grandmother did, and what her intentions must have been. He ought to make her a little allowance—that is the least he can do. Not, to be sure, such a provision as we all hoped Lady Mary was going to make for her, but enough to live upon. Mr Furnival, I believe, has written to him to that effect.”

“Hush!” cried the vicar’s wife; indeed she had been making signs to the other lady, who stood with her back to the door, for some moments. Mary had come in while this conversation was going on. She had not paid any attention to it; and yet her ear had been caught by the names of Lady Mary and the Earl and Mr Furnival. For whom was it that the Earl should make an allowance enough to live upon? whom Lady Mary had not provided for, and whom Mr Furnival had written about? When she sat down to the needlework in which she was helping Mrs Vicar, it was not to be supposed that she should not ponder these words—for some time very vaguely, not perceiving the meaning of them; and then with a start she woke up to perceive that there must be something meant, some one—even some one she knew. And then the needle dropped out of the girl’s hand, and the pinafore she was making fell on the floor. Some one! it must be herself they

meant! Who but she could be the subject of that earnest conversation? She began to remember a great many conversations as earnest, which had been stopped when she came into the room, and the looks of pity which had been bent upon her. She had thought in her innocence that this was because she had lost her godmother, her protectress—and had been very grateful for the kindness of her friends. But now another meaning came into everything. Mrs Bowyer had accompanied her visitor to the door, still talking, and when she returned her face was very grave. But she smiled when she met Mary’s look, and said cheerfully, “How kind of you, my dear, to make all those pinafores for me! The little ones will not know themselves. They never were so fine before.”

“Oh, Mrs Bowyer,” cried the girl, “I have guessed something, and I want you to tell me! Are you keeping me for charity, and is it I that am left—without any provision? and that Mr Furnival has written——”

She could not finish her sentence; for it was very bitter to her, as may be supposed.

“I don’t know what you mean, my dear,” cried the vicar’s wife. “Charity,—well, I suppose that is the same as love—at least it is so in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. You are staying with us, I hope, for love, if that is what you mean.”

Upon which she took the girl in her arms and kissed her, and cried as women must. “My dearest,” she said, “as you have guessed the worst, it is better to tell you. Lady Mary—I don’t know why,—oh, I don’t wish to blame her,—has left no will: and, my dear, my dear, you who have been brought up in luxury, you have not a penny.” Here the vicar’s wife

gave Mary a closer hug, and kissed her once more. "We love you all the better—if that was possible," she said.

How many thoughts will fly through a girl's mind while her head rests on some kind shoulder, and she is being consoled for the first calamity that has touched her life! She was neither ungrateful nor unresponsive; but as Mrs Bowyer pressed her close to her kind breast and cried over her, Mary did not cry but thought, seeing in a moment a succession of scenes, and realising in a moment so complete a new world, that all her pain was quelled by the hurry and rush in her brain as her forces rallied to sustain her. She withdrew from her kind support after a moment with eyes tearless and shining, the colour mounting to her face, and not a sign of discouragement in her, nor yet of sentiment, though she grasped her kind friend's hands with a pressure which her innocent small fingers seemed incapable of giving. "One has read of such things—in books," she said, with a faint courageous smile; "and I suppose they happen—in life."

"Oh, my dear, too often in life. Though how people can be so cruel, so indifferent, so careless of the happiness of those they love——"

Here Mary pressed her friend's hands till they hurt, and cried, "Not cruel, not indifferent. I cannot hear a word——"

"Well, dear, it is like you to feel so—I knew you would; and I will not say a word. Oh, Mary, if she ever thinks of such things now——"

"I hope she will not—I hope she cannot!" cried the girl, with once more a vehement pressure of her friend's hands.

"What is that?" Mrs Bowyer said, looking round. "It is some-

body in the next room, I suppose. No, dear; I hope so too, for she would not be happy if she remembered. Mary, dry your eyes, my dear. Try not to think of this. I am sure there is some one in the next room. And you must try not to look wretched, for all our sakes——"

"Wretched!" cried Mary, springing up. "I am not wretched." And she turned with a countenance glowing and full of courage to the door. But there was no one there—no visitor lingering in the smaller room as sometimes happened.

"I thought I heard some one come in," said the vicar's wife. "Didn't you hear something, Mary? I suppose it is because I am so agitated with all this, but I could have sworn I heard some one come in."

"There is nobody," said Mary, who, in the shock of the calamity which had so suddenly changed the world to her, was perfectly calm. She did not feel at all disposed to cry or "give way." It went to her head with a thrill of pain, which was excitement as well, like a strong stimulant suddenly applied; and she added, "I should like to go out a little, if you don't mind, just to get used to the idea."

"My dear, I will get my hat in a moment——"

"No, please. It is not unkindness; but I must think it over by myself—by myself," Mary cried. She hurried away, while Mrs Bowyer took another survey of the outer room, and called the servant to know who had been calling. Nobody had been calling, the maid said; but her mistress still shook her head.

"It must have been some one who does not ring, who just opens the door," she said to herself. "That is the worst of the country. It might be Mrs Blunt, or Sophia

Blackburn, or the curate, or half-a-dozen people—and they have just gone away when they heard me

crying. How could I help crying? But I wonder how much they heard, whoever it was."

VI.

It was winter, and snow was on the ground.

Lady Mary found herself on the road that led through her own village going home. It was like a picture of a wintry night—like one of those pictures that please the children at Christmas. A little snow sprinkled on the roofs, just enough to define them, and on the edges of the roads; every cottage window showing a ruddy glimmer in the twilight; the men coming home from their work; the children, tied up in comforters and caps, stealing in from the slides, and from the pond where they were forbidden to go; and, in the distance, the trees of the great House standing up dark, turning the twilight into night. She had a curious enjoyment in it, simple like that of a child, and a wish to talk to some one out of the fulness of her heart. She overtook, her step being far lighter and quicker than his, one of the men going home from his work, and spoke to him, telling him with a smile not to be afraid; but he never so much as raised his head, and went plodding on with his heavy step, not knowing that she had spoken to him. She was startled by this; but said to herself that the men were dull, that their perceptions were confused, and that it was getting dark—and went on, passing him quickly. His breath made a cloud in the air as he walked, and his heavy plodding steps sounded into the frosty night. She perceived that her own were invisible and inaudible, with a curious momentary sensation half of pleasure, half of pain. She felt no cold, and she saw through the twilight as clearly as if it had been

day. There was no fatigue or sense of weakness in her; but she had the strange, wistful feeling of an exile returning after long years, not knowing how he may find those he had left. At one of the first houses in the village there was a woman standing at her door, looking out for her children—one who knew Lady Mary well. She stopped quite cheerfully to bid her good evening, as she had done in her vigorous days, before she grew old. It was a little experiment, too. She thought it possible that Catherine would scream out, and perhaps fly from her; but surely would be easily reassured when she heard the voice she knew, and saw by her one who was no ghost, but her own kind mistress. But Catherine took no notice when she spoke; she did not so much as turn her head. Lady Mary stood by her patiently, with more and more of that wistful desire to be recognised. She put her hand timidly upon the woman's arm, who was thinking of nothing but her boys, and calling to them, straining her eyes in the fading light. "Don't be afraid—they are coming, they are safe," she said, pressing Catherine's arm. But the woman never moved. She took no notice. She called to a neighbour who was passing to ask if she had seen the children, and the two stood and talked in the dim air, not conscious of the third who stood between them, looking from one to another, astonished, paralysed. Lady Mary had not been prepared for this; she could not believe it even now. She repeated their names more and more anxiously, and even plucked at their sleeves

to call their attention. She stood as a poor dependant sometimes stands, wistful, civil, trying to say something that will please, while they talked and took no notice; and then the neighbour passed on, and Catherine went into her house. It is hard to be left out in the cold when others go into their cheerful houses; but to be thus left outside of life, to speak and not be heard, to stand, unseen, astounded, unable to secure any attention! She had thought they would be frightened, but it was not they who were frightened. A great panic seized the woman who was no more of this world. She had almost rejoiced to find herself back walking so lightly, so strongly, finding everything easy that had been so hard; and yet but a few minutes had passed, and she knew, never more to be deceived, that she was no longer of this world. What if she should be condemned to wander for ever among familiar places that knew her no more, appealing for a look, a word, to those who could no longer see her, or hear her cry, or know of her presence? Terror seized upon her, a chill and pang of fear beyond description. She felt an impulse to fly wildly into the dark, into the night, like a lost creature; to find again somehow, she could not tell how, the door out of which she had come, and beat upon it wildly with her hands, and implore to be taken home. For a moment she stood looking round her, lost and alone in the wide universe; no one to speak to her, no one to comfort her—outside of life altogether. Other rustic figures, slow-stepping, leisurely, at their ease, went and came, one at a time; but in this place, where every stranger was an object of curiosity, no one cast a glance at her. She was as if she had never been.

Presently she found herself entering her own house.

It was all shut up and silent,—not a window lighted along the whole front of the house which used to twinkle and glitter with lights. It soothed her somewhat to see this, as if in evidence that the place had changed with her. She went in silently, and the darkness was as day to her. Her own rooms were all shut up, yet were open to her steps, which no external obstacle could limit. There was still the sound of life below stairs, and in the housekeeper's room a cheerful party gathered round the fire. It was there that she turned first with some wistful human attraction towards the warmth and light rather than to the still places in which her own life had been passed. Mrs Prentiss, the housekeeper, had her daughter with her on a visit and the daughter's baby lay asleep in a cradle placed upon two chairs outside the little circle of women round the table—one of whom was Jervis, Lady Mary's maid. Jervis sat and worked and cried, and mixed her words with little sobs. "I never thought as I should have had to take another place," she said. "Brown and me, we made sure of a little something to start upon. He's been here for twenty years, and so have you, Mrs Prentiss; and me, as nobody can say I wasn't faithful night and day."

"I never had that confidence in my lady to expect anything," Prentiss said.

"Oh, mother, don't say that: many and many a day you've said, when my lady dies——"

"And we've all said it," said Jervis. "I can't think how she did it, nor why she did it; for she was a kind lady, though appearances is against her."

"She was one of them, and I've

known a many, as could not abide to see a gloomy face," said the housekeeper. "She kept us all comfortable for the sake of being comfortable herself, but no more."

"Oh, you are hard upon my lady!" cried Jervis, "and I can't bear to hear a word against her, though it's been an awful disappointment to me."

"What's you or me, or any one," cried Mrs Prentiss, "in comparison of that poor little thing that can't work for her living like we can; that is left on the charity of folks she don't belong to? I'd have forgiven my lady anything if she'd done what was right by Miss Mary. You'll get a place, and a good place; and me, they'll leave me here when the new folks come as have taken the house. But what will become of her, the darling? and not a penny, nor a friend, nor one to look to her? Oh, you selfish old woman! oh, you heart of stone! I just hope you are feeling it where you're gone," the housekeeper cried.

But as she said this, the woman did not know who was looking at her with wide wistful eyes, holding out her hands in appeal, receiving every word as if it had been a blow. Though she knew it was useless, Lady Mary could not help it. She cried out to them, "Have pity upon me! have pity upon me! I am not cruel, as you think," with a keen anguish in her voice, which seemed to be sharp enough to pierce the very air and go up to the skies. And so, perhaps, it did; but never touched the human atmosphere in which she stood a stranger. Jervis was threading her needle when her mistress uttered that cry, but her hand did not tremble, nor did the thread deflect a hair's-breadth from the straight line. The young mother alone seemed to be moved by some faint disturbance. "Hush!"

she said; "is he waking?" looking towards the cradle. But as the baby made no further sound, she too returned to her sewing; and they sat bending their heads over their work round the table, and continued their talk. The room was very comfortable, bright, and warm, as Lady Mary had liked all her rooms to be. The warm firelight danced upon the walls; the women talked in cheerful tones. She stood outside their circle, and looked at them with a wistful face. Their notice would have been more sweet to her as she stood in that great humiliation, than in other times the look of a queen.

"But what is the matter with baby?" the mother said, rising hastily.

It was with no servile intention of securing a look from that little prince of life that she who was not of this world had stepped aside forlorn, and looked at him in his cradle. Though she was not of this world, she was still a woman, and had nursed her children in her arms. She bent over the infant by the soft impulse of nature, tenderly, with no interested thought. But the child saw her; was it possible? He turned his head towards her, and flickered his baby hands, and cooed with that indescribable voice that goes to every woman's heart. Lady Mary felt such a thrill of pleasure go through her, as no incident had given her for long years. She put out her arms to him as the mother snatched him from his little bed; and he, which was more wonderful, stretched towards her in his innocence, turning away from them all.

"He wants to go to some one," cried the mother. "Oh look, look, for God's sake! who is there that the child sees?"

"There's no one there—not a soul. Now dearie, dearie, be reas-

onable. You can see for yourself there's not a creature," said the grandmother.

"Oh, my baby, my baby! He sees something we can't see," the young woman cried. "Something has happened to his father, or he's going to be taken from me!" she said, holding the child to her in a sudden passion. The other women rushed to her to console her—the mother with reason and Jervis with poetry. "It's the angels whispering, like the song says." Oh the pang that was in the heart of the other whom they could not hear! She stood wondering how it could be—wondering with an amazement beyond words, how all that was in her heart, the love and the pain, and the sweetness and bitterness, could all be hidden—all hidden by that air in which the women stood so clear! She held out her hands, she spoke to them, telling who she was, but no one paid any attention; only the little dog Fido, who had been basking by the fire, sprang up, looked at her, and, retreating slowly backwards till he reached the wall, sat down there and looked at her again, with now and then a little bark of inquiry. The dog saw her. This gave her a curious pang of humiliation, yet pleasure. She went away out of that little centre of human life in a great excitement and thrill of her whole being. The child had seen her and the dog; but, oh heavens! how was she to work out her purpose by such auxiliaries as these?

She went up to her old bed-chamber with unshed tears heavy about her eyes, and a pathetic smile quivering on her mouth. It touched her beyond measure that the child should have that confidence in her. "Then God is still with me," she said to herself. Her room, which had been so warm and bright, lay desolate in the stillness

of the night; but she wanted no light, for the darkness was no darkness to her. She looked round her for a little, wondering to think how far away from her now was this scene of her old life, but feeling no pain in the sight of it—only a kind indulgence for the foolish simplicity which had taken so much pride in all these infantile elements of living. She went to the little Italian cabinet which stood against the wall, feeling now at least that she could do as she would,—that here there was no blank of human unconsciousness to stand in her way. But she was met by something that baffled and vexed her once more. She felt the polished surface of the wood under her hand, and saw all the pretty ornamentation, the inlaid work, the delicate carvings, which she knew so well. They swam in her eyes a little, as if they were part of some phantasmagoria about her, existing only in her vision. Yet the smooth surface resisted her touch; and when she withdrew a step from it, it stood before her solidly and square, as it had stood always, a glory to the place. She put forth her hands upon it, and could have traced the waving lines of the exquisite work, in which some artist soul had worked itself out in the old times; but though she thus saw it and felt, she could not with all her endeavours find the handle of the drawer, the richly wrought knob of ivory, the little door that opened into the secret place. How long she stood by it, attempting again and again to find what was as familiar to her as her own hand, what was before her, visible in every line, what she felt with fingers which began to tremble, she could not tell. Time did not count with her as with common men. She did not grow weary, or

require refreshment or rest, like those who were still of this world. But at length her head grew giddy and her heart failed. A cold despair took possession of her soul. She could do nothing then—nothing ; neither by help of man, neither by use of her own faculties, which were greater and clearer than ever before. She sank down upon the floor at the foot of that old toy, which had pleased her in the softness of her old age, to which she had trusted the fortunes of another ; by which, in wantonness and folly, she had sinned, she had sinned ! And she thought she saw standing round her companions in the land she had left, saying, “It is impossible, impossible !” with infinite pity in their eyes ; and the face of Him who had given her permission to come, yet who had

said no word to her to encourage her in what was against nature. And there came into her heart a longing to fly, to get home, to be back in the land where her fellows were, and her appointed place. A child lost, how pitiful that is ! without power to reason and divine how help will come ; but a soul lost, outside of one method of existence, withdrawn from the other, knowing no way to retrace its steps, nor how help can come ! There had been no bitterness in the passing from earth to the land where she had gone ; but now there came upon her soul, in all the power of her new faculties, the bitterness of death. The place which was hers she had forsaken and left, and the place that had been hers knew her no more.

VII.

Mary, when she left her kind friend in the vicarage, went out and took a long walk. She had received a shock so great that it took all sensation from her, and threw her into the seething and surging of an excitement altogether beyond her control. She could not think until she had got familiar with the idea, which indeed had been vaguely shaping itself in her mind ever since she had emerged from the first profound gloom and prostration of the shadow of death. She had never definitely thought of her position before—never even asked herself what was to become of her when Lady Mary died. She did not see, any more than Lady Mary did, why she should ever die ; and girls, who have never wanted anything in their lives, who have had no sharp experience to enlighten them, are slow to think upon such subjects. She had not expected anything ; her mind

had not formed any idea of inheritance : and it had not surprised her to hear of the Earl, who was Lady Mary’s natural heir ; nor to feel herself separated from the house in which all her previous life had been passed. But there had been gradually dawning upon her a sense that she had come to a crisis in her life, and that she must soon be told what was to become of her. It was not so urgent as that she should ask any questions ; but it began to appear very clearly in her mind that things were not to be with her as they had been. She had heard the complaints and astonishment of the servants, to whom Lady Mary had left nothing, with resentment. Jervis, who could not marry and take her lodging-house, but must wait until she had saved more money, and wept to think, after all her devotion, of having to take another place ; and Mrs Prentiss, the housekeeper,

who was cynical, and expounded Lady Mary's kindness to her servants to be the issue of a refined selfishness ; and Brown, who had sworn subdued oaths, and had taken the liberty of representing himself to Mary as "in the same box" with herself. Mary had been angry, very angry at all this ; and she had not by word or look given any one to understand that she felt herself "in the same box." But yet she had been vaguely anxious, curious, desiring to know. And she had not even begun to think what she should do. That seemed a sort of affront to her godmother's memory, at all events, until some one had made it clear to her. But now, in a moment, with her first consciousness of the importance of this matter in the sight of others, a consciousness of what it was to herself, came into her mind. A change of everything—a new life—a new world ; and not only so, but a severance from the old world,—a giving up of everything that had been most near and pleasant to her.

These thoughts were driven through her mind like the snow-flakes in a storm. The year had slid on since Lady Mary's death. Winter was beginning to yield to spring ; the snow was over and the great cold. And other changes had taken place. The great house had been let, and the family who had taken it had been about a week in possession. Their coming had inflicted a wound upon Mary's heart ; but everybody had urged upon her the idea that it was much better the house should be let for a time "till everything was settled." When all was settled things would be different. Mrs Vicar did not say, "You can then do what you please," but she did convey to Mary's mind somehow a

sort of inference that she would have something to do it with. And when Mary had protested, "It shall never be let again with my will," the kind woman had said tremulously, "Well, my dear!" and had changed the subject. All these things now came to Mary's mind. They had been afraid to tell her ; they had thought it would be so much to her—so important, such a crushing blow. To have nothing—to be destitute ; to be written about by Mr Furnival to the Earl ; to have her case represented—Mary felt herself stung by such unendurable suggestions into an energy—a determination—of which her soft young life had known nothing. No one should write about her, or ask charity for her, she said to herself. She had gone through the woods and round the park, which was not large, and now she could not leave these beloved precincts without going to look at the house. Up to this time she had not had the courage to go near the house ; but to the commotion and fever of her mind every violent sensation was congenial, and she went up the avenue now almost gladly, with a little demonstration to herself of energy and courage. Why not that as well as all the rest?

It was once more twilight, and the dimness favoured her design. She wanted to go there unseen, to look up at the windows with their alien lights, and to think of the time when Lady Mary sat behind the curtains, and there was nothing but tenderness and peace throughout the house. There was a light in every window along the entire front, a lavishness of firelight and lamplight which told of a household in which there were many inhabitants. Mary's mind was so deeply absorbed, and perhaps her eyes so dim with tears that she

could scarcely see what was before her, when the door opened suddenly and a lady came out. "I will go myself," she said in an agitated tone to some one behind her. "Don't get yourself laughed at," said a voice from within. The sound of the voices roused the young spectator. She looked with a little curiosity, mixed with anxiety, at the lady who had come out of the house, and who started, too, with a gesture of alarm, when she saw Mary move in the dark. "Who are you?" she cried out in a trembling voice, "and what do you want here?"

Then Mary made a step or two forward and said, "I must ask your pardon if I am trespassing. I did not know there was any objection——" This stranger to make an objection! It brought something like a tremulous laugh to Mary's lips.

"Oh, there is no objection," said the lady, "only we have been a little put out. I see now: you are the young lady who—you are the young lady that;—you are the one that—suffered most."

"I am Lady Mary's goddaughter," said the girl. "I have lived here all my life."

"Oh, my dear, I have heard all about you," the lady cried. The people who had taken the house were merely rich people; they had no other characteristic; and in the vicarage, as well as in the other houses about, it was said when they were spoken of, that it was a good thing they were not people to be visited, since nobody could have had the heart to visit strangers in Lady Mary's house. And Mary could not but feel a keen resentment to think that her story, such as it was, the story which she had only now heard in her own person, should be discussed by such people. But the speaker had a

look of kindness, and, so far as could be seen, of perplexity and fretted anxiety in her face, and had been in a hurry, but stopped herself in order to show her interest. "I wonder," she said impulsively, "that you can come here and look at the place again after all that has passed."

"I never thought," said Mary, "that there could be—any objection."

"Oh, how can you think I mean that? how can you pretend to think so?" cried the other impatiently. "But after you have been treated so heartlessly, so unkindly,—and left, poor thing! they tell me, without a penny, without any provision——"

"I don't know you," cried Mary, breathless with quick-rising passion. "I don't know what right you can have to meddle with my affairs."

The lady stared at her for a moment without speaking, and then she said, all at once, "That is quite true—but it is rude as well; for though I have no right to meddle with your affairs, I did it in kindness, because I took an interest in you from all I have heard."

Mary was very accessible to such a reproach and argument. Her face flushed with a sense of her own churlishness. "I beg your pardon," she said; "I am sure you mean to be kind."

"Well," said the stranger, "that is perhaps going too far on the other side, for you can't even see my face to know what I mean. But I do mean to be kind, and I am very sorry for you. And though I think you've been treated abominably, all the same I like you better for not allowing any one to say so. And now, do you know where I was going? I was going to the vicarage,—where you are

living, I believe,—to see if the vicar, or his wife, or you, or all of you together, could do a thing for me."

"Oh, I am sure Mrs Bowyer——" said Mary, with a voice much less assured than her words.

"You must not be too sure, my dear. I know she doesn't mean to call upon me, because my husband is a City man. That is just as she pleases. I am not very fond of City men myself. But there's no reason why I should stand on ceremony when I want something, is there? Now, my dear, I want to know—— Don't laugh at me. I am not superstitious, so far as I am aware; but—— Tell me, in your time was there ever any disturbance, any appearances you couldn't understand, any—— Well, I don't like the word ghosts. It's disrespectful, if there's anything of the sort; and it's vulgar if there isn't. But you know what I mean. Was there anything—of that sort—in your time?"

In your time! Poor Mary had scarcely realised yet that her time was over. Her heart refused to allow it when it was thus so abruptly brought before her; but she obliged herself to subdue these rising rebellions, and to answer, though with some *hauteur*. "There is nothing of the kind that I ever heard of. There is no superstition or ghost in our house."

She thought it was the vulgar desire of new people to find a conventional mystery, and it seemed to Mary that this was a desecration of her home. Mrs Turner, however (for that was her name), did not receive the intimation as the girl expected, but looked at her very gravely, and said, "That makes it a great deal more serious," as if to herself. She paused, and then added, "You see, the case is this. I have a little girl who is

our youngest, who is just my husband's idol. She is a sweet little thing, though perhaps I should not say it. Are you fond of children? Then I almost feel sure you would think so too. Not a moping child at all, or too clever, or anything to alarm one. Well, you know, little Connie, since ever we came in, has seen an old lady walking about the house——"

"An old lady!" said Mary, with an involuntary smile.

"Oh yes. I laughed too, the first time. I said it would be old Mrs Prentiss, or perhaps the charwoman, or some old lady from the village that had been in the habit of coming in the former people's time. But the child got very angry. She said it was a real lady. She would not allow me to speak. Then we thought perhaps it was some one who did not know the house was let, and had walked in to look at it; but nobody would go on coming like that with all the signs of a large family in the house. And now the doctor says the child must be low, that the place perhaps doesn't agree with her, and that we must send her away. Now, I ask you, how could I send little Connie away, the apple of her father's eye? I should have to go with her, of course, and how could the house get on without me? Naturally we are very anxious. And this afternoon she has seen her again, and sits there crying because she says the dear old lady looks so sad. I just seized my hat, and walked out, to come to you and your friends at the vicarage to see if you could help me. Mrs Bowyer may look down upon a City person—I don't mind that; but she is a mother, and surely she would feel for a mother," cried the poor lady vehemently, putting up her hands to her wet eyes.

"Oh indeed, indeed she would!

I am sure now that she will call directly. We did not know what a——” Mary stopped herself in saying, “what a nice woman you are,” which she thought would be rude, though poor Mrs Turner would have liked it. But then she shook her head and added, “What could any of us do to help you? I have never heard of any old lady. There never was anything—— I know all about the house, everything that has ever happened, and Prentiss will tell you. There is nothing of that kind—indeed, there is nothing. You must have——” But here Mary stopped again; for to suggest that a new family, a city family, should have brought an apparition of their own with them, was too ridiculous an idea to be entertained.

“Miss Vivian,” said Mrs Turner, “will you come back with me and speak to the child?”

At this Mary faltered a little. “I have never been there—since the—funeral,” she said.

The good woman laid a kind hand upon her shoulder, caressing and soothing. “You were very fond of her—in spite of the way she has used you?”

“Oh, how dare you, or any one, to speak of her so? She used me as if I had been her dearest child. She was more kind to me than a mother. There is no one in the world like her!” Mary cried.

“And yet she left you without a penny. Oh, you must be a good girl to feel for her like that. She left you without—— What are you going to do, my dear? I feel like a friend. I feel like a mother to you, though you don’t know me. You mustn’t think it is only curiosity. You can’t stay with your friends for ever,—and what are you going to do?”

There are some cases in which it

is more easy to speak to a stranger than to one’s dearest and oldest friend. Mary had felt this when she rushed out, not knowing how to tell the vicar’s wife that she must leave her, and find some independence for herself. It was, however, strange to rush into such a discussion with so little warning, and Mary’s pride was very sensitive. She said, “I am not going to burden my friends,” with a little indignation; but then she remembered how forlorn she was, and her voice softened. “I must do something—but I don’t know what I am good for,” she said, trembling, and on the verge of tears.

“My dear, I have heard a great deal about you,” said the stranger; “it is not rash, though it may look so. Come back with me directly, and see Connie. She is a very interesting little thing, though I say it—it is wonderful sometimes to hear her talk. You shall be her governess, my dear. Oh, you need not teach her anything—that is not what I mean. I think, I am sure, you will be the saving of her, Miss Vivian; and such a lady as you are, it will be everything for the other girls to live with you. Don’t stop to think, but just come with me. You shall have whatever you please, and always be treated like a lady. Oh, my dear, consider my feelings as a mother, and come; oh, come to Connie! I know you will save her; it is an inspiration. Come back! Come back with me!”

It seemed to Mary too like an inspiration. What it cost her to cross that threshold and walk in, a stranger, to the house which had been all her life as her own, she never said to any one. But it was independence; it was deliverance from entreaties and remonstrances without end. It was a kind of setting right, so far as

could be, of the balance which had got so terribly wrong. No writing to the Earl now; no appeal to

friends,—anything in all the world, much more honest service and kindness, must be better than that.

VIII.

"Tell the young lady all about it, Connie," said her mother.

But Connie was very reluctant to tell. She was very shy, and clung to her mother, and hid her face in her ample dress; and though presently she was beguiled by Mary's voice, and in a short time came to her side, and clung to her as she had clung to Mrs Turner, she still kept her secret to herself. They were all very kind to Mary, the elder girls standing round in a respectful circle looking at her, while their mother exhorted them to "take a pattern" by Miss Vivian. The novelty, the awe which she inspired, the real kindness about her, ended by overcoming in Mary's young mind the first miserable impression of such a return to her home. It gave her a kind of pleasure to write to Mrs Bowyer that she had found employment, and had thought it better to accept it at once. "Don't be angry with me: and I think you will understand me," she said. And then she gave herself up to the strange new scene.

The "ways" of the large simple-minded family, homely yet kindly, so transformed Lady Mary's graceful old rooms that they no longer looked the same place. And when Mary sat down with them at the big heavy-laden table, surrounded with the hum of so large a party, it was impossible for her to believe that everything was not new about her. In no way could the saddening recollections of a home from which the chief figure had disappeared have been more completely broken up. Afterwards Mrs Turner took

her aside, and begged to know which was Mary's old room, "for I should like to put you there, as if nothing had happened." "Oh, do not put me there!" Mary cried, "so much has happened." But this seemed a refinement to the kind woman, which it was far better for her young guest not to "yield" to. The room Mary had occupied had been next to her godmother's, with a door between, and when it turned out that Connie, with an elder sister, was in Lady Mary's room, everything seemed perfectly arranged in Mrs Turner's eyes. She thought it was providential, with a simple belief in Mary's powers that in other circumstances would have been amusing. But there was no amusement in Mary's mind when she took possession of the old room "as if nothing had happened." She sat by the fire for half the night, in an agony of silent recollection and thought, going over the last days of her godmother's life, calling up everything before her, and realising, as she had never realised till now, the lonely career on which she was setting out, the subjection to the will and convenience of strangers in which henceforth her life must be passed. This was a kind woman who had opened her doors to the destitute girl; but notwithstanding, however great the torture to Mary, there was no escaping this room, which was haunted by the saddest recollections of her life. Of such things she must no longer complain—nay, she must think of nothing but thanking the mistress of the house for her thoughtfulness, for the wish to be

kind which so often exceeds the performance.

The room was warm and well lighted; the night was very calm and sweet outside. Nothing had been touched or changed of all her little decorations, the ornaments which had been so delightful to her girlhood. A large photograph of Lady Mary held the chief place over the mantelpiece, representing her in the fulness of her beauty,—a photograph which had been taken from the picture painted ages ago by a Royal Academician. It was fortunately so little like Lady Mary in her old age that, save as a thing which had always hung there, and belonged to her happier life, it did not affect the girl; but no picture was necessary to bring before her the well-remembered figure. She could not realise that the little movements she heard on the other side of the door were any other than those of her mistress, her friend, her mother, for all these names Mary lavished upon her in the fulness of her heart. The blame that was being cast upon Lady Mary from all sides made this child of her bounty but more deeply her partisan, more warm in her adoration. She would not, for all the inheritances of the world, have acknowledged even to herself that Lady Mary was in fault. Mary felt that she would rather a thousand times be poor and have to gain her daily bread, than that she who had nourished and cherished her should have been forced in her cheerful old age to think, before she chose to do so, of parting and farewell and the inevitable end.

She thought, like every young creature in strange and painful circumstances, that she would be unable to sleep, and did indeed lie awake and weep for an hour or more, thinking of all the changes that had happened; but sleep over-

took her before she knew, while her mind was still full of these thoughts; and her dreams were endless, confused, full of misery and longing. She dreamed a dozen times over that she heard Lady Mary's soft call through the open door—which was not open, but shut closely and locked by the sisters who now inhabited the next room; and once she dreamed that Lady Mary came to her bedside and stood there looking at her earnestly with the tears flowing from her eyes. Mary struggled in her sleep to tell her benefactress how she loved her, and approved of all she had done, and wanted nothing—but felt herself bound as by a nightmare, so that she could not move or speak, or even put out a hand to dry those tears which it was intolerable to her to see; and woke with the struggle, and the miserable sensation of seeing her dearest friend weep and being unable to comfort her. The moon was shining into the room, throwing part of it into a cold full light, while blackness lay in all the corners. The impression of her dream was so strong that Mary's eyes turned instantly to the spot where in her dream her godmother had stood. To be sure there was nobody there; but as her consciousness returned, and with it the sweep of painful recollection, the sense of change, the miserable contrast between the present and the past, sleep fled from her eyes. She fell into the vividly awake condition which is the alternative of broken sleep, and gradually, as she lay, there came upon her that mysterious sense of another presence in the room, which is so subtle and indescribable. She neither saw anything nor heard anything, and yet she felt that some one was there.

She lay still for some time and held her breath, listening for a

movement, even for the sound of breathing, scarcely alarmed, yet sure that she was not alone. After a while she raised herself on her pillow, and in a low voice asked, "Who is there? is any one there?" There was no reply, no sound of any description, and yet the conviction grew upon her. Her heart began to beat, and the blood to mount to her head. Her own being made so much sound, so much commotion, that it seemed to her she could not hear anything save those beatings and pulsings. Yet she was not afraid. After a time, however, the oppression became more than she could bear. She got up and lit her candle, and searched through the familiar room; but she found no trace that any one had been there. The furniture was all in its usual order. There was no hiding-place where any human thing could find refuge. When she had satisfied herself, and was about to return to bed, suppressing a sensation which must, she said to herself, be altogether fantastic, she was startled by a low knocking at the door of communication. Then she heard the voice of the elder girl. "Oh, Miss Vivian—what is it? Have you seen anything?" A new sense of anger, disdain, humiliation, swept through Mary's mind. And if she had seen anything, she said to herself, what was that to those strangers? She replied, "No, nothing; what should I see?" in a tone which was almost haughty in spite of herself.

"I thought it might be—the ghost. Oh, please, don't be angry. I thought I heard this door open, but it is locked. Oh! perhaps it is very silly, but I am so frightened, Miss Vivian."

"Go back to bed," said Mary; "there is no—ghost. I am going to sit up and write some—letters.

You will see my light under the door."

"Oh, thank you," cried the girl.

Mary remembered what a consolation and strength in all wakefulness had been the glimmer of the light under her godmother's door. She smiled to think that she herself, so desolate as she was, was able to afford this innocent comfort to another girl, and then sat down and wept quietly, feeling her solitude and the chill about her, and the dark and the silence. The moon had gone behind a cloud. There seemed no light but her small, miserable candle in earth and heaven. And yet that poor little speck of light kept up the heart of another—which made her smile again in the middle of her tears. And by-and-by the commotion in her head and heart calmed down, and she too fell asleep.

Next day she heard all the floating legends that were beginning to rise in the house. They all arose from Connie's questions about the old lady whom she had seen going up-stairs before her, the first evening after the new family's arrival. It was in the presence of the doctor—who had come to see the child, and whose surprise at finding Mary there was almost ludicrous—that she heard the story, though much against his will.

"There can be no need for troubling Miss Vivian about it," he said, in a tone which was almost rude. But Mrs Turner was not sensitive.

"When Miss Vivian has just come, like a dear, to help us with Connie!" the good woman cried. "Of course she must hear it, doctor; for otherwise, how could she know what to do?"

"Is it true that you have come here—*here*? to help— Good heavens, Miss Mary, *here*?"

"Why not here?" Mary said,

smiling as best she could. "I am Connie's governess, doctor."

He burst out into that suppressed roar which serves a man instead of tears, and jumped up from his seat, clenching his fist. The clenched fist was to the intention of the dead woman whose fault this was; and if it had ever entered the doctor's mind, as his mother supposed, to marry this forlorn child, and thus bestow a home upon her whether she would or no, no doubt he would now have attempted to carry out that plan. But as no such thing had occurred to him, the doctor only showed his sense of the intolerable by look and gesture. "I must speak to the vicar. I must see Furnival. It can't be permitted," he cried.

"Do you think I shall not be kind to her, doctor?" cried Mrs Turner. "Oh, ask her! She is one that understands. She knows far better than that. We're not fine people, doctor, but we're kind people. I can say that for myself. There is nobody in this house but will be good to her, and admire her, and take an example by her. To have a real lady with the girls, that is what I would give anything for; and as she wants taking care of, poor dear, and petting, and an 'ome——"

Mary, who would not hear any more, got up hastily, and took the hand of her new protectress, and kissed her, partly out of gratitude and kindness, partly to stop her mouth, and prevent the saying of something which it might have been still more difficult to support. "You are a real lady yourself, dear Mrs Turner," she cried. (And this notwithstanding the one deficient letter: but many people who are much more dignified than Mrs Turner—people who behave themselves very well in every other respect—say "'ome.")

"Oh, my dear, I don't make any pretensions," the good woman cried, but with a little shock of pleasure which brought the tears to her eyes.

And then the story was told. Connie had seen the lady walk upstairs, and had thought no harm. The child supposed it was some one belonging to the house. She had gone into the room which was now Connie's room, but as that had a second door, there was no suspicion caused by the fact that she was not found there a little time after, when the child told her mother what she had seen. After this Connie had seen the same lady several times, and once had met her face to face. The child declared that she was not at all afraid. She was a pretty old lady, with white hair and dark eyes. She looked a little sad, but smiled when Connie stopped and stared at her—not angry at all, but rather pleased—and looked for a moment as if she would speak. That was all. Not a word about a ghost was said in Connie's hearing. She had already told it all to the doctor, and he had pretended to consider which of the old ladies in the neighbourhood this could be. In Mary's mind, occupied as it was by so many important matters, there had been up to this time no great question about Connie's apparition: now she began to listen closely, not so much from real interest as from a perception that the doctor, who was her friend, did not want her to hear. This naturally aroused her attention at once. She listened to the child's description with growing eagerness, all the more because the doctor opposed.

"Now that will do, Miss Connie," he said; "it is one of the old Miss Murchisons, who are always so fond of finding out about their neighbours. I have no doubt at all

on that subject. She wants to find you out in your pet naughtiness, whatever it is, and tell me."

"I am sure it is not for that," cried Connie. "Oh, how can you be so disagreeable? I know she is not a lady who would tell. Besides, she is not thinking at all about me. She was either looking for something she had lost, or—oh, I don't know what it was!—and when she saw me she just smiled. She is not dressed like any of the people here. She had got no cloak on, or bonnet, or anything that is common, but a beautiful white shawl and a long dress, and it gives a little sweep when she walks—oh no! not like your rustling, mamma; but all soft, like water—and it looks like lace upon her head, tied here," said Connie, putting her hands to her chin, "in such a pretty, large, soft knot."

Mary had gradually risen as this description went on, starting a little at first, looking up, getting upon her feet. The colour went altogether out of her face—her eyes grew to twice their natural size. The doctor put out his hand without looking at her, and laid it on her arm with a strong emphatic pressure. "Just like some one you have seen a picture of," he said.

"Oh no. I never saw a picture that was so pretty," said the child.

"Doctor, why do you ask her any more? don't you see, don't you see, the child has seen——?"

"Miss Mary, for God's sake, hold your tongue; it is folly, you know. Now, my little girl, tell me. I know this old lady is the very image of that pretty old lady with the toys for good children, who was in the last Christmas number?"

"Oh!" said Connie, pausing a little. "Yes, I remember; it was a very pretty picture—mamma put

it up in the nursery. No, she is not like that, not at all, much prettier; and then *my* lady is sorry about something—except when she smiles at me. She has her hair put up like this, and this," the child went on, twisting her own bright locks.

"Doctor! I can't bear any more."

"My dear! you are mistaken, it is all a delusion. She has seen a picture. I think now, Mrs Turner, that my little patient had better run away and play. Take a good run through the woods, Miss Connie, with your brother, and I will send you some physic which will not be at all nasty, and we shall hear no more of your old lady. My dear Miss Vivian, if you will but hear reason! I have known such cases a hundred times. The child has seen a picture, and it has taken possession of her imagination. She is a little below par, and she has a lively imagination: and she has learned something from Prentiss, though probably she does not remember that. And there it is! a few doses of quinine, and she will see visions no more."

"Doctor," cried Mary, "how can you speak so to me? You dare not look me in the face. You know you dare not: as if you did not know as well as I do! Oh, why does that child see her, and not me?"

"There it is," he said, with a broken laugh; "could anything show better that it is a mere delusion? Why, in the name of all that is reasonable, should this stranger child see her, if it was anything, and not you?"

Mrs Turner looked from one to another with wondering eyes. "You know what it is?" she said. "Oh, you know who it is? Doctor, doctor, is it because my Connie is so delicate? is it a warning? is it——?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake! you will drive me mad, you ladies. Is it this, and is it that? It is nothing, I tell you. The child is out of sorts, and she has seen some picture that has caught her fancy—and she thinks she sees—— I'll send her a bottle," he cried, jumping up; "that will put an end to all that."

"Doctor, don't go away: tell me rather what I must do—if she is looking for something! Oh, doctor, think if she were unhappy, if she were kept out of her sweet rest!"

"Miss Mary! for God's sake, be reasonable. You ought never to have heard a word."

"Doctor, think! if it should be anything we can do. Oh, tell me, tell me! don't go away and leave me: perhaps we can find out what it is."

"I will have nothing to do with your findings out. It is mere delusion. Put them both to bed, Mrs Turner—put them all to bed! As if there was not trouble enough!"

"What is it?" cried Connie's mother; "is it a warning! Oh, for the love of God, tell me, is that what comes before a death?"

When they were all in this state of agitation, the Vicar and his wife were suddenly shown into the room. Mrs Bowyer's eyes flew to Mary, but she was too well-bred a woman not to pay her respects first to the lady of the house, and there were a number of politenesses exchanged, very breathlessly on Mrs Turner's part, before the new-comers were free to show the real occasion of their visit. "Oh, Mary, what did you mean by taking such a step all in a moment? How could you come here of all places in the world? and how could you leave me without a word?" the Vicar's wife said, with her lips against Mary's

cheek. She had already perceived, without dwelling upon it, the excitement in which all the party were. This was said while the Vicar was still making his bow to his new parishioner—who knew very well that her visitors had not intended to call: for the Turners were dissenters, to crown all their misdemeanours, besides being city people and *nouveaux riches*.

"Don't ask me any questions just now," said Mary, clapping almost hysterically her friend's hand. "It was providential. Come and hear what the child has seen." Mrs Turner, though she was so anxious, was too polite not to make a fuss about getting chairs for all her visitors. She postponed her own trouble to this necessity, and trembling, sought the most comfortable seat for Mrs Bowyer, the largest and most imposing for the Vicar himself. When she had established them in a little circle, and done her best to draw Mary too into a chair, she sat down quietly, her mind divided between the cares of courtesy and the alarms of an anxious mother. Mary stood at the table and waited till the commotion was over. The new comers thought she was going to explain her conduct in leaving them; and Mrs Bowyer, at least, who was critical in point of manners, shivered a little, wondering if perhaps (though she could not find it in her heart to blame Mary) her proceedings were in perfect taste.

"The little girl," Mary said, beginning abruptly. She had been standing by the table, her lips apart, her countenance utterly pale, her mind evidently too much absorbed to notice anything. "The little girl—has seen several times a lady going up-stairs. Once she met her and saw her face, and the lady smiled at her; but her face was

sorrowful, and the child thought she was looking for something. The lady was old, with white hair done up upon her forehead, and lace upon her head. She was dressed,"—here Mary's voice began to be interrupted from time to time by a brief sob,—“in a long dress that made a soft sound when she walked, and a white shawl, and the lace tied under her chin in a large soft knot——”

“Mary, Mary!” Mrs Bowyer had risen, and stood behind the girl, in whose slender throat the climbing sorrow was almost visible, supporting her, trying to stop her. “Mary, Mary!” she cried; “oh, my darling, what are you thinking of? Francis! doctor! make her stop, make her stop——”

“Why should she stop?” said Mrs Turner, rising, too, in her agitation. “Oh, is it a warning, is it a warning? for my child has seen it—Connie has seen it.”

“Listen to me, all of you,” said Mary, with an effort. “You all know—who that is. And she has seen her—the little girl——”

Now the others looked at each other, exchanging a startled look.

“My dear people,” cried the doctor, “the case is not the least unusual. No, no, Mrs Turner, it is no warning—it is nothing of the sort. Look here, Bowyer; you'll believe me. The child is very nervous and sensitive. She has evidently seen a picture somewhere of our dear old friend. She has heard the story somehow—oh, perhaps in some garbled version from Prentiss, or—of course they've all been talking of it. And the child is one of those creatures with its nerves all on the surface—and a little below par in health, in need of iron and quinine, and all that sort of thing. I've seen a hundred such cases,” cried the doctor—“a thousand such; but now, of course, we'll

have a fine story made of it, now that it's come into the ladies' hands.”

He was much excited with this long speech; but it cannot be said that any one paid much attention to him. Mrs Bowyer was holding Mary in her arms, uttering little cries and sobs over her, and looking anxiously at her husband. The vicar sat down suddenly in his chair, with the air of a man who has judgment to deliver without the least idea what to say; while Mary, freeing herself unconsciously from her friend's restraining embrace, stood facing them all with a sort of trembling defiance: and Mrs Turner kept on explaining nervously that—“no, no, her Connie was not excitable, was not oversensitive, never had known what a delusion was.”

“This is very strange,” the Vicar said.

“Oh, Mr Bowyer,” cried Mary, “tell me what I am to do!—think if she cannot rest, if she is not happy, she that was so good to everybody, that never could bear to see any one in trouble. Oh, tell me, tell me what I am to do! It is you that have disturbed her with all you have been saying. Oh, what can I do, what can I do to give her rest?”

“My dear Mary! My dear Mary!” they all cried in different tones of consternation; and for a few minutes no one could speak. Mrs Bowyer, as was natural, said something, being unable to endure the silence; but neither she nor any of the others knew what it was she said. When it was evident that the Vicar must speak, all were silent, waiting for him; and though it had now become imperative that something in the shape of a judgment must be delivered, yet he was as far as ever from knowing what to say.

"Mary," he said, with a little tremulousness of voice, "it is quite natural that you should ask me; but, my dear, I am not at all prepared to answer. I think you know that the doctor, who ought to know best about such matters——"

"Nay, not I. I only know about the physical; the other—if there is another—that's your concern."

"Who ought to know best," repeated Mr Bowyer; "for everybody will tell you, my dear, that the mind is so dependent upon the body. I suppose he must be right. I suppose it is just the imagination of a nervous child working upon the data which has been given—the picture; and then, as you justly remind me, all we have been saying——"

"How could the child know what we have been saying, Francis?"

"Connie has heard nothing that any one has been saying; and there is no picture."

"My dear lady, you hear what the doctor says. If there is no picture, and she has heard nothing, I suppose, then, your premises are gone, and the conclusion falls to the ground."

"What does it matter about premises?" cried the Vicar's wife; "here is something dreadful that has happened. Oh, what nonsense that is about imagination; children have no imagination. A dreadful thing has happened. In heaven's name, Francis, tell this poor child what she is to do."

"My dear," said the Vicar again, "you are asking me to believe in purgatory,—nothing less. You are asking me to contradict the Church's teaching. Mary, you must compose yourself. You must wait till this excitement has passed away."

"I can see by her eyes she did not sleep last night," the doctor said, relieved. "We shall have

her seeing visions too, if we don't take care."

"And, my dear Mary," said the Vicar, "if you will think of it, it is derogatory to the dignity of the——of our dear friends who have passed away. How can we suppose that one of the blessed would come down from heaven, and walk about her own house, which she had just left, and show herself to a—to a—little child who had never seen her before."

"Impossible," said the doctor. "I told you so—a stranger—that had no connection with her; knew nothing about her——"

"Instead of," said the Vicar, with a slight tremor, "making herself known, if that was permitted, to—to me, for example; or our friend here."

"That sounds reasonable, Mary," said Mrs Bowyer; "don't you think so, my dear? If she had come to one of us, or to yourself, my darling, I should never have wondered, after all that has happened. But to this little child——"

"Whereas there is nothing more likely—more consonant with all the teachings of science—than that the little thing should have this hallucination, of which you ought never to have heard a word. You are the very last person——"

"That is true," said the Vicar, "and all the associations of the place must be overwhelming. My dear, we must take her away with us. Mrs Turner, I am sure, is very kind, but it cannot be good for Mary to be here."

"No, no! I never thought so," said Mrs Bowyer; "I never intended—dear Mrs Turner, we all appreciate your motives. I hope you will let us see much of you, and that we may become very good friends. But, Mary—it is her first grief, don't you know?" said the Vicar's wife, with the tears in her

eyes; "she has always been so much cared for, so much thought of all her life,—and then all at once! You will not think that we misunderstand your kind motives; but it is more than she can bear. She made up her mind in a hurry without thinking. You must not be annoyed if we take her away."

Mrs Turner had been looking from one to another while this

dialogue went on. She said now, a little wounded, "I wished only to do what was kind; but, perhaps, I was thinking most of my own child. Miss Vivian must do what she thinks best."

"You are all kind—too kind," Mary cried; "but no one must say another word, please. Unless Mrs Turner should send me away, until I know what this all means, it is my place to stay here."

IX.

It was Lady Mary who had come into the vicarage that afternoon when Mrs Bowyer supposed some one had called. She wandered about to a great many places in these days, but always returned to the scenes in which her life had been passed, and where alone her work could be done, if it were done at all. She came in and listened while the tale of her own carelessness and heedlessness was told, and stood by while her favourite was taken to another woman's bosom for comfort, and heard everything and saw everything. She was used to it by this time: but to be nothing is hard, even when you are accustomed to it; and though she knew that they would not hear her, what could she do but cry out to them as she stood there unregarded? "Oh, have pity upon me!" Lady Mary said; and the pang in her heart was so great that the very atmosphere was stirred, and the air could scarcely contain her and the passion of her endeavour to make herself known, but thrilled like a harp-string to her cry. Mrs Bowyer heard the jar and tingle in the inanimate world; but she thought only that it was some charitable visitor who had come in, and gone softly away again at the sound of tears.

And if Lady Mary could not

make herself known to the poor cottagers who had loved her, or to the women who wept for her loss while they blamed her, how was she to reveal herself and her secret to the men who, if they had seen her, would have thought her a hallucination? Yes, she tried all, and even went a long journey over land and sea to visit the Earl who was her heir, and awake in him an interest in her child. And she lingered about all these people in the silence of the night, and tried to move them in dreams, since she could not move them waking. It is more easy for one who is no more of this world, to be seen and heard in sleep; for then those who are still in the flesh stand on the borders of the unseen, and see and hear things which, waking, they do not understand. But alas! when they woke, this poor wanderer discovered that her friends remembered no more what she had said to them in their dreams.

Presently, however, when she found Mary re-established in her old home, in her own room, there came to her a new hope. For there is nothing in the world so hard to believe, or to be convinced of, as that no effort, no device, will ever make you known and visible to those you love. Lady Mary being little altered in her character,

though so much in her being, still believed that if she could but find the way, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all would be revealed and understood. She went to Mary's room with this new hope strong in her heart. When they were alone together, in that nest of comfort which she had herself made beautiful for her child,—two hearts so full of thought for each other,—what was there in earthly bonds which could prevent them from meeting? She went into the silent room, which was so familiar and dear, and waited like a mother long separated from her child, with a faint doubt trembling on the surface of her mind, yet a quaint joyful confidence underneath in the force of nature. A few words would be enough,—a moment, and all would be right. And then she pleased herself with fancies of how, when that was done, she would whisper to her darling what has never been told to flesh and blood; and so go home proud, and satisfied, and happy in the accomplishment of all that she had hoped.

Mary came in with her candle in her hand, and closed the door between her and all external things. She looked round wistful with that strange consciousness which she had already experienced that some one was there. The other stood so close to her that the girl could not move without touching her. She held up her hands, imploring, to the child of her love. She called to her, "Mary, Mary!" putting her hands upon her, and gazed into her face with an intensity and anguish of eagerness which might have drawn the stars out of the sky. And a strange tumult was in Mary's bosom. She stood looking blankly round her, like one who is blind with open eyes, and saw nothing; and strained her ears, like a deaf man, but heard nothing.

All was silence, vacancy, an empty world about her. She sat down at her little table, with a heavy sigh. "The child can see her, but she will not come to me," Mary said, and wept.

Then Lady Mary turned away with a heart full of despair. She went quickly from the house, out into the night. The pang of her disappointment was so keen, that she could not endure it. She remembered what had been said to her in the place from whence she came, and how she had been entreated to be patient and wait. Oh, had she but waited and been patient! She sat down upon the ground, a soul forlorn, outside of life, outside of all things, lost in a world which had no place for her. The morn shone, but she made no shadow in it; the rain fell upon her, but did not hurt her; the little night-breeze blew without finding any resistance in her. She said to herself, "I have failed. What am I that I should do what they all said was impossible? It was my pride, because I have had my own way all my life. But now I have no way and no place on earth, and what I have to tell them will never, never be known. Oh my little Mary, a servant in her own house! And a word would make it right!—but never, never can she hear that word. I am wrong to say never; she will know when she is in heaven. She will not live to be old and foolish, like me. She will go up there early, and then she will know. But I, what will become of me?—for I am nothing here, and I cannot go back to my own place."

A little moaning wind rose up suddenly in the middle of the dark night, and carried a faint wail, like the voice of some one lost, to the windows of the sleeping house. It woke the children,

and Mary, who opened her eyes quickly in the dark, wondering if perhaps now the vision might

come to her. But the vision had come when she could not see it, and now returned no more.

X.

On the other side, however, visions which had nothing sacred in them began to be heard of, and Connie's ghost, as it was called in the house, had various vulgar effects. A housemaid became hysterical, and announced that she too had seen the lady, of whom she gave a description, exaggerated from Connie's, which all the household were ready to swear she had never heard. The lady, whom Connie had only seen passing, went to Betsy's room in the middle of the night, and told her, in a hollow and terrible voice, that she could not rest, opening a series of communications by which it was evident all the secrets of the unseen world would soon be disclosed. And following upon this, there came a sort of panic in the house—noises were heard in various places, sounds of footsteps pacing, and of a long robe sweeping about the passages; and Lady Mary's costume, and the head-dress which was so peculiar, which all her friends had recognised in Connie's description, grew into something portentous under the heavier hand of the foot-boy and the kitchen-maid. Mrs Prentiss, who had remained as a special favour to the new people, was deeply indignant and outraged by this treatment of her mistress. She appealed to Mary with mingled anger and tears.

"I would have sent the hussy away at an hour's notice, if I had the power in my hands," she cried; "but, Miss Mary, it is easily seen who is a real lady and who is not. Mrs Turner interferes herself in everything, though she likes it to be supposed that she has a housekeeper."

"Dear Prentiss, you must not say Mrs Turner is not a lady. She has far more delicacy of feeling than many ladies," cried Mary.

"Yes, Miss Mary, dear, I allow that she is very nice to you; but who could help that? and to hear my lady's name—that might have her faults, but who was far above anything of the sort—in every mouth, and her costume, that they don't know how to describe, and to think that *she* would go and talk to the like of Betsy Barnes about what is on her mind! I think sometimes I shall break my heart, or else throw up my place, Miss Mary," Prentiss said, with tears.

"Oh, don't do that; oh, don't leave me, Prentiss!" Mary said, with an involuntary cry of dismay.

"Not if you mind, not if you mind, dear," the housekeeper cried. And then she drew close to the young lady with an anxious look. "You haven't seen anything?" she said. "That would be only natural, Miss Mary. I could well understand she couldn't rest in her grave—if she came and told it all to you."

"Prentiss, be silent," cried Mary; "that ends everything between you and me if you say such a word. There has been too much said already—oh, far too much! as if I only loved her for what she was to leave me."

"I did not mean that, dear," said Prentiss; "but——"

"There is no but; and everything she did was right," the girl cried with vehemence. She shed hot and bitter tears over this wrong which all her friends did to Lady Mary's memory. "I am glad it

was so," she said to herself when she was alone, with youthful extravagance. "I am glad it was so; for now no one can think that I loved her for anything but herself."

The household, however, was agitated by all these rumours and inventions. Alice, Connie's elder sister, declined to sleep any longer in that which began to be called

the haunted room. She, too, began to think she saw something, she could not tell what, gliding out of the room as it began to get dark, and to hear sighs and moans in the corridors. The servants, who all wanted to leave, and the villagers, who avoided the grounds after nightfall, spread the rumour far and near that the house was haunted.

XI.

In the meantime Connie herself was silent, and said no more of the Lady. Her attachment to Mary grew into one of those visionary passions which little girls so often form for young women. She followed her so-called governess wherever she went, hanging upon her arm when she could, holding her dress when no other hold was possible—following her everywhere, like her shadow. The vicarage, jealous and annoyed at first, and all the neighbours indignant too, to see Mary metamorphosed into a dependant of the city family, held out as long as possible against the good-nature of Mrs Turner, and were revolted by the spectacle of this child claiming poor Mary's attention wherever she moved. But by-and-by all these strong sentiments softened, as was natural. The only real drawback was, that amid all these agitations Mary lost her bloom. She began to droop and grow pale under the observation of the watchful doctor, who had never been otherwise than dissatisfied with the new position of affairs, and betook himself to Mrs Bowyer for sympathy and information. "Did you ever see a girl so fallen off?" he said. "Fallen off, doctor! I think she is prettier and prettier every day." "Oh," the poor man cried, with a strong breathing of impatience, "you ladies think of nothing but

prettiness! was I talking of prettiness? She must have lost a stone since she went back there. It is all very well to laugh," the doctor added, growing red with suppressed anger, "but I can tell you that is the true test. That little Connie Turner is as well as possible; she has handed over her nerves to Mary Vivian. I wonder now if she ever talks to you on that subject."

"Who? little Connie?"

"Of course I mean Miss Vivian, Mrs Bowyer. Don't you know the village is all in a tremble about the ghost at the Great House?"

"Oh yes, I know; and it is very strange. I can't help thinking, doctor——"

"We had better not discuss that subject. Of course I don't put a moment's faith in any such nonsense. But girls are full of fancies. I want you to find out for me whether she has begun to think she sees anything. She looks like it; and if something isn't done she will soon do so, if not now."

"Then you do think there is something to see," said Mrs Bowyer, clasping her hands; "that has always been my opinion: what so natural——?"

"As that Lady Mary, the greatest old aristocrat in the world, should come and make private revelations to Betsy Barnes, the

under housemaid——?" said the doctor, with a sardonic grin.

"I don't mean that, doctor; but if she could not rest in her grave, poor old lady——"

"You think then, my dear," said the vicar, "that Lady Mary, our old friend, who was as young in her mind as any of us, lies body and soul in that old dark hole of a vault?"

"How you talk, Francis! what can a woman say between you horrid men? I say if she couldn't rest—wherever she is—because of leaving Mary destitute, it would be only natural—and I should think the more of her for it," Mrs Bowyer cried.

The vicar had a gentle professional laugh over the confusion of

his wife's mind. But the doctor took the matter more seriously. "Lady Mary is safely buried and done with. I am not thinking of her," he said; "but I am thinking of Mary Vivian's senses, which will not stand this much longer. Try and find out from her if she sees anything: if she has come to that, whatever she says we must have her out of there."

But Mrs Bowyer had nothing to report when this conclave of friends met again. Mary would not allow that she had seen anything. She grew paler every day, her eyes grew larger, but she made no confession. And Connie bloomed and grew, and met no more old ladies upon the stairs.

XII.

The days passed on, and no new event occurred in this little history. It came to be summer—balmy and green—and everything around the old house was delightful, and its beautiful rooms became more pleasant than ever in the long days and soft brief nights. Fears of the Earl's return and of the possible end of the Turner's tenancy began to disturb the household, but no one so much as Mary, who felt herself to cling as she had never done before to the old house. She had never got over the impression that a secret presence, revealed to no one else, was continually near her, though she saw no one. And her health was greatly affected by this visionary double life.

This was the state of affairs on a certain soft wet day when the family were all within doors. Connie had exhausted all her means of amusement in the morning. When the afternoon came, with its long, dull, uneventful hours, she had nothing better to do than

to fling herself upon Miss Vivian, upon whom she had a special claim. She came to Mary's room, disturbing the strange quietude of that place, and amused herself looking over all the trinkets and ornaments that were to be found there, all of which were associated to Mary with her godmother. Connie tried on the bracelets and brooches which Mary in her deep mourning had not worn, and asked a hundred questions. The answer which had to be so often repeated, "That was given to me by my godmother," at last called forth the child's remark, "How fond your godmother must have been of you, Miss Vivian! she seems to have given you everything——"

"Everything!" cried Mary, with a full heart.

"And yet they all say she was not kind enough," said little Connie—"what do they mean by that? for you seem to love her very much still, though she is dead. Can one go on loving people when they are dead?"

"Oh yes, and better than ever," said Mary; "for often you do not know how you loved them, or what they were to you, till they are gone away."

Connie gave her governess a hug and said, "Why did not she leave you all her money, Miss Vivian? everybody says she was wicked and unkind to die without——"

"My dear," cried Mary, "do not repeat what ignorant people say, because it is not true."

"But mamma said it, Miss Vivian."

"She does not know, Connie—you must not say it. I will tell your mamma she must not say it; for nobody can know so well as I do—and it is not true——"

"But they say," cried Connie, "that that is why she can't rest in her grave. You must have heard. Poor old lady, they say she cannot rest in her grave because——"

Mary seized the child in her arms with a pressure that hurt Connie. "You must not! you must not!" she cried, with a sort of panic. Was she afraid that some one might hear? She gave Connie a hurried kiss, and turned her face away, looking out into the vacant room. "It is not true! it is not true!" she cried, with a great excitement and horror, as if to stay a wound. "She was always good, and like an angel to me. She is with the angels. She is with God. She cannot be disturbed by anything—anything! Oh let us never say, or think, or imagine——!" Mary cried. Her cheeks burned, her eyes were full of tears. It seemed to her that something of wonder and anguish and dismay was in the room round her—as if some one unseen had heard a bitter reproach, an accusation undeserved, which must wound to the very heart.

Connie struggled a little in that too tight hold. "Are you fright-

ened, Miss Vivian? what are you frightened for? No one can hear; and if you mind it so much, I will never say it again."

"You must never, never say it again. There is nothing I mind so much," Mary said.

"Oh!" said Connie, with mild surprise. Then as Mary's hold relaxed, she put her arms round her beloved companion's neck. "I will tell them all you don't like it. I will tell them they must not—— Oh!" cried Connie again, in a quick astonished voice. She clutched Mary round the neck, returning the violence of the grasp which had hurt her, and with her other hand pointed to the door. "The lady! the lady! Oh, come and see where she is going!" Connie cried.

Mary felt as if the child in her vehemence lifted her from her seat. She had no sense that her own limbs or her own will carried her in the impetuous rush with which Connie flew. The blood mounted to her head. She felt a heat and throbbings as if her spine were on fire. Connie, holding by her skirts, pushing her on, went along the corridor to the other door, now deserted, of Lady Mary's room. "There, there! don't you see her? She is going in," the child cried, and rushed on, clinging to Mary, dragging her on, her light hair streaming, her little white dress waving.

Lady Mary's room was unoccupied and cold—cold, though it was summer, with the chill that rests in uninhabited apartments. The blinds were drawn down over the windows; a sort of blank whiteness, greyness, was in the place, which no one ever entered. The child rushed on with eager gestures, crying "Look! look!" turning her lively head from side to side. Mary, in a still and passive expectation, seeing nothing, looking

mechanically where Connie told her to look, moving like a creature in a dream, against her will, followed. There was nothing to be seen. The blank, the vacancy went to her heart. She no longer thought of Connie or her vision. She felt the emptiness with a desolation such as she had never felt before. She loosed her arm with something like impatience from the child's close clasp. For months she had not entered the room which was associated with so much of her life. Connie and her cries and warnings passed from her mind like the stir of a bird or a fly. Mary felt herself alone with her dead, alone with her life, with all that had been and that never could be again. Slowly, without knowing what she did, she sank upon her knees. She raised her face in the blank of desolation about her to the unseen heaven.

Unseen! unseen! whatever we may do. God above us, and those who have gone from us, and He who has taken them, who has redeemed them, who is ours and theirs, our only hope; but all unseen, unseen, concealed as much by the blue skies as by the dull blank of that roof. Her heart ached and cried into the unknown. "O God," she cried, "I do not know where she is, but Thou art everywhere. O God, let her know that I have never blamed her, never wished it otherwise, never ceased to love her, and thank her, and bless her. God! God!" cried Mary, with a great and urgent cry, as if it were a man's name. She knelt there for a moment before her senses failed her, her eyes shining as if they would burst from their sockets, her lips dropping apart, her countenance like marble—.

XIII.

"And *She* was standing there all the time," said Connie, crying and telling her little tale after Mary had been carried away—"standing with her hand upon that cabinet, looking and looking, oh,

as if she wanted to say something and couldn't. Why couldn't she, mamma? Oh, Mr Bowyer, why couldn't she, if she wanted so much? Why wouldn't God let her speak?"

XIV.

Mary had a long illness, and hovered on the verge of death. She said a great deal in her wanderings about some one who had looked at her. "For a moment, a moment," she would cry; "only a moment! and I had so much to say." But as she got better nothing was said to her about this face she had seen. And perhaps it was only the suggestion of some feverish dream. She was taken away, and was a long time getting up her strength; and in the meantime the Turners insisted that the drains should

be thoroughly seen to, which were not at all in a perfect state. And the Earl coming to see the place, took a fancy to it, and determined to keep it in his own hands. He was a friendly person, and his ideas of decoration were quite different from those of his grandmother. He gave away a great deal of her old furniture, and sold the rest.

Among the articles given away was the Italian cabinet which the vicar had always had a fancy for; and naturally it had not

been in the vicarage a day before the boys insisted on finding out the way of opening the secret drawer.

And there the paper was found in the most natural way, without any trouble or mystery at all.

XV.

They all gathered to see the wanderer coming back. She was not as she had been when she went away. Her face, which had been so easy, was worn with trouble; her eyes were deep with things unspeakable. Pity and knowledge were in the lines which time had not made. It was a great event in that place to see one come back who did not come by the common way. She was received by the great officer who had given her permission to go, and her companions who had received her at the first all came forward, wondering, to hear what she had to say: because it only occurs to those wanderers who have gone back to earth of their own will to return when they have accomplished what they wished, or it is judged above that there is nothing possible more. Accordingly the question was on all their lips, "You have set the wrong right—you have done what you desired?"

"Oh," she said, stretching out her hands, "how well one is in one's own place! how blessed to be at home! I have seen the trouble and sorrow in the earth till my heart is sore, and sometimes I have been near to die."

"But that is impossible," said the man who had loved her.

"If it had not been impossible, I should have died," she said. "I have stood among people who loved me, and they have not seen me nor

known me, nor heard my cry. I have been outcast from all life, for I belonged to none. I have longed for you all, and my heart has failed me. Oh how lonely it is in the world when you are a wanderer, and can be known of none——"

"You were warned," said he who was in authority, "that it was more bitter than death."

"What is death?" she said. And no one made any reply. Neither did any one venture to ask her again whether she had been successful in her mission. But at last, when the warmth of her appointed home had melted the ice about her heart, she smiled once more and spoke.

"The little children knew me; they were not afraid of me; they held out their arms. And God's dear and innocent creatures——" She wept a few tears, which were sweet after the ice-tears she had shed upon the earth. And then some one, more bold than the rest, asked again, "And did you accomplish what you wished?"

She had come to herself by this time, and the dark lines were melting from her face. "I am forgiven," she said, with a low cry of happiness. "She whom I wronged loves me and blessed me; and we saw each other face to face. I know nothing more."

"There is no more," said all together. For everything is included in pardon and love.

FIGURES IN THE FIRE.

UP to this day I have fenced pretty evenly with the winter. Partly by luck, partly by management, I have escaped discomfort as the weather has become sharper. But to-day, somehow or other, the frost-king contrived to give me a palpable hit,—sent me home shivering and aching physically, and morally with my teeth on edge. Well, I was soon in the vicinity of a good fire, giving hope that ease and equanimity would speedily be recovered. I know, however, by experience, that tranquillity does not return the moment one has seen the fire; it is not until after some continued sojourn near it that one is disposed to chirp out, “Aha! I am warm!” So I thought, an hour or so ago, that I would turn discomfort to commodity, and take note of the bodily and mental process of recovering an agreeable temperature. The result has been, not any addition to physiological science, but this discursive paper which I am beginning to write.

I observed only that the warmth, in its initial cherishing of my system, did not soothe or lull, but rather induced an irritability of body and an unpleasant activity of mind. It is impossible to recount the quantity of thoughts which came in unbidden. The recollection of them makes me think of the wonderful *rifacciamento* of his life which is set before a drowning man all in a few seconds; I was busy with all things whatsoever, and certain others. Gradually, however, this tumult of ideas subsided, as bodily comfort came back; the number and the pace of the phantasms decreased appreciably. The first stage of the warming process was over.

In the second my mind was still vivid enough to present certain subjects in quite new lights, and to make me resolve that I would forthwith give to the world the benefit of these conceptions. But, little by little, the lights and my resolution lost force; the images began to drag slowly and to impress but little; there did not, on reconsideration, seem to be much to tell.

Finally, as a delightful glow steals over me, ideas become exceedingly sluggish and dull; so far are they from any longer intruding themselves on me, that I can hardly maintain any mental briskness at all. I am not going to sleep,—that is not it; but there is a void where ideas were lately so busy. This I feel disagreeably; I have the desire to ponder still, but want material for the process. I cast about, hoping to find it. The light of day is now declining, and my gaze fastens more and more upon the fire, which is in a most cheerful state of combustion,—flame being rather scarce, but a deep red glow pervading the mass. To such a blank state am I reduced that I peer into the coals, which are now more fantastic than my mind is, to see if haply they have a suggestion worth accepting.

Yes; there is a tableau there, in red and grey and black, which at once commends itself to the barren fancy,—a tragic tableau. There are two hands, with parts of the arms behind them visible, but the rest of the body to which they belong not discernible. The hands are approaching, or leaving, a figure about whose whole form and condition there can be no doubt. It is a person suspended by the neck: I see the rope, a grey thread, and the

beam above from which it depends. The hanged one presents a suspicion of legs, but no arm at all, for he is clearly pinioned; and his head inclines to one shoulder, just like life,—no, like death—death by the hand of the law. Now, then, I have something to think of, and I think; but at first not so much about the principal figure in my fire-piece as about the two unowned arms. Of course I do just bethink me of the executions—all too few—which have been done upon the murderous villains over the water. But I am struck by two bodyless arms, which seem quite a stroke of genius in the fire-artist, who must have remembered, when he moulded his group, that the skilful practitioner who, as finisher of the law, relieved us of the presence of so many scoundrels, has himself lately gone over to the majority, and sleeps in dull cold matter of some sort. It is only too true. Mr Marwood, who threw to the wolfish maw of death so many victims, has been himself appropriated by the bony one, and will scrag no more.

Now the late Mr Marwood, though I had not the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, does, in his public character, present to my mind an interesting reflection or two. In his career may be perceived a new illustration of the mutability of terrestrial things, and of the influence of fashion in regard to even hangmen. For the sentiments of society towards these indispensable officials are by no means immutable, although they do not vary suddenly or capriciously, but continue for long periods in one direction, like the magnetic variation or the precession of the equinoxes. It was Mr Marwood's destiny to light upon a favourable tide in the affairs of hangmen; and he had genius enough to take the

current when it served, and so to magnify his office.

There have been times when the finisher of the law might calculate upon the rabble's curse, and probably upon some more solid expression of the rabble's disesteem, if he showed himself openly to the world; wherefore it was his custom to go very softly, to use disguises often, and to withdraw from the busy haunts of men when not called by professional duties to offer himself to observation. But it was not Mr Marwood's lot to be driven to obscurity for safety. The temper of the world in which he lived and operated was such, that if he did not excite love and gratitude, he inspired a certain respect and awe, which to some minds are the highest and most agreeable tribute. Men would tell their children "This is he;" others would say? "Where? which is Marwood?" So far were his movements from being stealthy or timid, that journalists announced his progresses, and the public seemed profoundly interested in revelations of his natural history. His food, recreations, and opinions were regarded as important matters. We all heard how, not long before his lamented decease, he was provided with an honourable seat, where he might hear the debates in the House of Commons. He was recognised there by our legislators, who were impressed by this near approach—this almost fusion of the authors and the finisher, the alpha and the omega, of the law. It is much to be wished that those honourable members who, by the testimony of a Minister of the Crown, are known to be "steeped to the lips in treason," may have felt a few *rigors* at this proximity of "treason's true goal and yielder up of breath."

Neither did the public interest

subside when the dread figure of the executioner was finally withdrawn from their view. Photographs of him have been, as we are told, sold in immense numbers. America has vied with his native land in seeking for relics of him. His ropes, his straps have been bidden for heavily, and despatched to the four airts. While denizens of many lands thus compete for the tokens and implements of his craft,

“Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,”

we must confess that at least one hangman has gone down to his grave an object of—what shall we say?—well, of curious consideration, and not of disgust and abhorrence.

Now it is not so very long ago, for I can recollect the days when the hangman was regarded by country people with intense loathing and superstitious dread. At the time of which I speak, one functionary could not suffice for all England, let alone Wales and Ireland—first, because it did not require so much interest as it now does to get hanged, and there were a great many more “children of the cord”; secondly, because communication was not quite easy and certain; so that it did not do for the executioner to live far from his work. He was a very mysterious individual, whose name was not generally known; he turned up from nowhere when he was wanted, and vanished into space when his work was done. All men would have avoided him, unless they might have sought him to do him injury. I rather think, however, that nineteen out of twenty would have preferred to give him a wide berth. As I passed my youth in an assize town, I had opportunities of ascertaining the general feeling regarding the hangman. I quite remember one person delivering his sentiments on

the subject as follows: “I s’pose there must be one of that trade, or we shouldn’t get rid of our rogues and murderers; but he have got blood upon his hands” (in a figure, I presume); “only as he’s useful I don’t want to do un no harm; but eat with un, sleep with un, come anigh un if I could help it—no, not I!”—this said with a look of intense loathing.

There comes back to me as I write the case of the landlady of a public-house, which had for a couple of nights given shelter to a quiet respectable-looking person dressed in black—a man who gave pretty liberal orders, and paid his bill on leaving without asking a question. A few hours after his departure she spoke in his praise to certain of her customers, one of whom said: “And do you know who your nice lodger was, Missus?” “No,” she replied, “I don’t know his name; but he slept in No. 3.” “Then,” said the other, “No. 3 held the hangman; for I saw the man about here, and afterwards saw un at the hanging.” Whereupon the landlady fell down in convulsions, was carried to bed, and lay there very ill for some days, horrified at the idea that she had had the hangman in her house.

So far my own testimony. But according to that of persons who could look back forty years, or, by’r Lady, half a century, farther than I could, the throttling business had once been managed in an exceedingly easy, friendly way; and I should think, from the anecdote which I am about to relate at second-hand only, that the hangman of those days could not have been especially odious to the community. The executions, it seems, were then effected, not at or near the jail, but on a down just beyond the town, where grew a con-

venient tree with a strong projecting bough which answered admirably, according to the rude notions of old, for a gallows. In my earliest day the down had been enclosed, and the tree was not. I was given to understand that the progress, through part of the town, of the convict to the fatal tree (a distance of a mile or thereabouts), was effected in a cart drawn by one horse, and driven by the hangman, who was then a native of the place, but who, being stricken in years, was aided and supported in the execution of his duty by his spouse, who was more vigorous, and probably younger, than himself. In the centre of the cart was the shell in which the body was to be carried to the grave; and around this were arranged the condemned man, one or two of the sheriff's retainers to guard him and witness the execution of the sentence, and the jail chaplain in his cassock. The exhortations and consolations of the reverend gentleman were understood to be administered during the drive, so that there was need of but little delay for religious purposes beneath the tree, where the cart was conveniently stopped. The ceremony consisted in, first, the descent of the sheriff's men and the parson from the interior of the cart, and the mounting into the same of the hangman; second, of the scientific adjustment of the halter (the sufferer having been pinioned before he left the jail), and the return of the executioner to *terra firma*; thirdly, of the canting up of the cart simultaneously with the utterance of a "gee-up" to the horse, which last proceedings left the convict swinging, while the cart moved away to a short distance. On the occasion to which I particularly here refer, the male executioner simply legalised by his presence the course of

things, while his more efficient helpmate actually did the work of doom. The old lady was heard by my informant to say tenderly to the moribund one, while arranging preliminaries, "Hold your head to one side, my dear; I won't hurt 'ee."

In these days of form and punctilio, one can hardly realise the humble and rather slipshod course of justice which I have endeavoured to describe. The sufferer, as it would seem, subscribed as readily as any other actor to the eternal fitness of things, and lent his neck to the cord with a sweet acquiescence. But his docility will appear less strange when we remember that he was pinioned, as has been said, and that criminals of that period were invariably in heavy irons. His personal objection to being quietly hanged would therefore have been of but slight importance. As to how things would have gone if there had been a disposition among the bystanders to (in Mrs Quickly's phrase) "bring a rescue or two," I did not think of inquiring, and I shall never be able to ask now; but I presume that the magistracy was pretty well aware of the public sentiment, and would have provided accordingly if there had been reason to apprehend interference.

This long unthought-of tale has brought up another *souvenir* of long ago still connected with the image in the fire, which, with the sharpness of its edges calcined off, is yet apparent. There was a very humorous and quaint old fellow, who in the days of my youth performed the duties of sexton in the graveyard of the assize town aforesaid. I often had a chat with him while he was at his work, as did many another boy, for he was strangely amusing — much more so than either of Hamlet's friends. He

told me one day of an adventure which went nigh to freezing my young blood, but which fascinated so that I demanded more and more particulars to feed my terror. He was (so he said) one night when in his youth—he had tried many trades and seen a good deal of the rural world before he took to grave-digging—he was, I say, returning home at night after a somewhat idle day; for a man had been hanged, probably by the lady whom I have mentioned above. His way to his cottage lay through this very graveyard, where, during most of my acquaintance with him, he reigned despotically as curator, or, as he himself put it, “steward of this vineyard of mortality;” and as he passed the corner where the convicts were buried, he was struck by hearing, in the otherwise quiet night, some sounds which appeared to him to be unusual and remarkable. He paused for a while to consider what they could possibly mean. “If I was inclined to be a fool now,” said he to himself, “I should say ’twas some of the dead speaking, and go into fits wi’ fright.” Being too hard-headed for this he waited, turning possibilities in his mind, when at last it occurred to him that the convict’s body had most likely been deposited near where the sounds seemed to be coming from—for the noise continued while he communed with himself. No sooner did this idea of the convict strike him than he courageously left the path and made his way across the “vineyard,” groping his way at last to a new grave which he knew by the soft earth under his feet. Up from this grave came the unearthly—rather the very earthly—sounds. He was awed a good deal, but he did not lose his head. While a perspiration broke out all over him he decided, “This is no

ghostly business; the man hath come to life!”

Off he set as fast as he could make his way in the dark across the graves; and having regained the path, went at full speed to his home. There, having aroused half-a-dozen of his neighbours, he told what he had discovered, and the account was received with incredulity, derision, or awe, according to the dispositions of his hearers; but nobody believed the simple fact of which he had assured himself—viz., that the man was alive. He had, however, sufficient influence with them, believing or not, to induce them to get their delving tools, as he got his, and a rope, and to light a lantern. It is a proof of his having been a shrewd, thoughtful man, that, before they started again, he despatched one of their number to a doctor to tell what was believed to have occurred, and to ask his attendance.

Confident from companionship the party then made haste to the graveyard, where every one of them was soon convinced that this was no fiction and no mistake, but that sounds, which in all probability proceeded from a living being, were coming up through the filling of a new grave. Thereupon they set to work with all their might in reliefs of two men each. They had a depth of between four and five feet of mould to excavate, but that was speedily done by their accustomed arms. The tools struck on the wood of a coffin, the surface of which having been cleared of earth, no doubt now remained that the sounds which had appeared so mysterious, and which were being continued now almost as lustily as when first heard, were emitted from within it. As I understood the story they were not articulate sounds, but eager shouting and hallooing.

Without delay they disinterred the shell, examining which by the light of the lantern, they soon pronounced it to be that of the man who had been hanged, judging from the frail construction and the absence of letters and handles. Moreover, they perceived that the weight of the earth had broken the lid near the man's head.

At this time the doctor had not arrived, and the half-dozen clowns had to decide on what should now be done. Naturally enough they thought that air must be the thing principally required; they also reflected that the doctor, when he should arrive, could not judge of the state of things until he could see the patient. Accordingly they were unanimous to "have off" the lid, which they at once accomplished by main force, laying hold of the edges of the fracture. Instead of seeing the man whom they had unearthed revive on taking in the fresh air, they perceived that the shouting ceased, and by the glimmer of the lantern they looked on a seemingly inanimate body. This unexpected and unsatisfactory result of their exertions discouraged and perplexed them; and they were about to lift the man out as a preliminary to using such restoratives as they could think of, when they were somewhat relieved by the arrival of the doctor. The latter, after a short examination, said that he believed the body to be dead; and no effort could bring again the least appearance of animation. He gave full credit to the story of the poor fellows who had worked so earnestly and to so little purpose, and explained how, through the bungling work of the old hangman, or the hangwoman, the neck had never been broken; furthermore, that when the coffin-lid gave way by reason of the weight of the earth, it broke the man's nose and so

brought him back to such a state of semi-consciousness as led to his shouting. "Had I been with you five minutes earlier," said he, "it is possible that he might have been fully restored; but you made a fatal mistake, my lads, in letting the full volume of the air come to him at first. That overpowered the feeble spark of life that was in him. He died beside his own grave. But you acted humanely and for the best; his life, remember, was already forfeit to the law; and you must let that console you for your lost labour." I do not give this story merely on the authority of the old sexton: the doctor had been many years dead when I first heard it; but his sons and daughters were living and well known to me, and from them I obtained a full confirmation of the tale.

I have just two or three words more to say about this old sexton, for one memory brings another in its train. He was, as I have said, most quaint and amusing; but he had a caustic tongue, and a ready answer for everybody. His humour and his anecdotes fascinated boys who could not resist the temptation of listening to him while he was at his work, and of sometimes venturing to bandy words with him in order to draw him out. But this latter was a dangerous experiment, and very likely to bring confusion to the essayist. I do, however, remember to have heard the old fellow once, and once only, a little "shut up." Several boys were standing round a grave which he was digging, and in which he was sunk to the shoulders, while his old mouth, which was still above ground, was giving forth saws and repartees with great vivacity. He was in one of his most brilliant moods. Presently there came up part of a decayed jawbone and two or three loose teeth, which were

not decayed at all, but white and clean. One of these teeth a lad of his audience picked up, and having examined it, deposited in a tiny space which time had made between a monument and a wall. The sexton, having observed this action, interrupted his discourse and apostrophised the offender—

"My dear," said he—this being his usual address to young and old on peaceful occasions—"My dear, why do 'ee do that? How dare 'ee? Don't you know that that tooth will be called for one day?"

To which the graceless youth replied, "Yes, certainly, Uncle¹ Willie; that is just why I did it. We shall know now where to find it."

There was no answer, but the elder's eyes danced, and he laughed inwardly.

My pendent figure has quite burned away while I have been letting my pen run. Where it appeared there is a great space now among the coals; and as I regard the space more particularly, I perceive that it has bounds, and that the form is that of a teacup, the resemblance being the more striking from the figure of a spoon standing up in it. Now I am not very curious in china cups, or cups of any kind, but I own to having had, in these latter days, some sad thoughts on the declining reputation of tea itself. It is no longer the beverage which "cheers but not inebriates;" if we listen to the most radical of our dietists, it is a rank poison. I am not sure but that it is more deadly than the long-denounced alcohol, which has been so thoroughly vilified that its learned assailants can find no convenient bit of surface on which to

implant a stab or a kick, and so are driven to attack a new offender. Now tea does, in these circumstances, exceedingly well to be angry. After the way in which we English, not so long ago, thought proper to laud and cherish it, it may well complain that our heart is no longer towards it as of yore—

"Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?"

I can remember when I lay in a tropical fever, and my soul desired drink. "Take some tea," said my doctor; "tea will only soothe and heal you: take as much as you like of that." Now I suppose that I should, in the same circumstances, be told to refrain from tea as from perdition.

So good was the reputation of tea *officially*, that great efforts were made in her Majesty's navy, about thirty years ago, to increase the consumption of it. The proffered extra allowance of tea was as compensation for a reduced allowance of grog, and little favour did it find from Jack, however graciously it may have been regarded by his masters. There was to be no forcing of its adoption, but unlimited persuasion was to be used in order that it might be voluntarily accepted. One captain told me that he had assembled his tars, and exhorted them, as eloquently as he knew how, to refuse the evil, and to choose the good (as it was then the fashion to consider it). When he had said his say, knowing that Jack's first feeling would be one of indignation, he said he would not ask for an answer then, but would receive it three days after, by which time they would have been able to think calmly

¹ The mode of addressing, and speaking of, an old man in the far west of England, from whence, I doubt not, it was exported to America.

over the proposal. At the end of three days the ship's company, choosing purposely to misunderstand the offer, intimated, through a deputation, their gratitude for the choice which had been allowed them, and their determination to give up their present ration of tea, and to get a trifle more grog! In spite of the sailors' ingenuity, and their preference for alcohol, tea, backed by the Admiralty, before long carried the day. But how is it to be in the navy of the near future? It seems as if, should the disrepute into which tea is falling become more and more confirmed, the mariners, managing matters discreetly, might recover some of their lost, but ever-regretted, grog. Grog itself (that is to say, *rum and water*, which appears to be what grog originally signified) was once itself an alteration in his ration very distasteful to Jack when it was made. He had been accustomed to consume his rum raw, or at any rate to receive his allowance undiluted, and to deal with it as he pleased. It seldom pleased him, I fancy, to mix it with water; and bitter and contemptuous was his denunciation of the new-fangled and "lubberly" grog. The new mixture was introduced by Admiral Vernon, who had been long known in the service as "Old Grog," because he wore program breeches. So Jack, in the bitterness of his soul, bestowed on the emasculated drink the name of its author and introducer.¹

I look into my fire once more, but there really is not in it at the moment the likeness of anything, as far as I can discover; so that even the fire is not at all times a certain generator of thought. So I fall to musing on the many gen-

erations of Englishmen who have enjoyed themselves before a sea-coal fire, of the worship (established, as it seemed, thirty or forty years ago) accorded to the grate in an English apartment, and of the prospect which is now opening of this time-honoured fixture being displaced by some modern invention, as itself superseded the capacious open hearth of long ago. For four or five centuries sea-coal has been burned in our seaports and large towns. We have become wedded to our chimney-corners and our genial fires, the hospitable blaze of Christmas, the enlivening warmth of the domestic hearth, the legendary glow in the twilight. It will be a hard lesson how to do without the familiar presence through a northern winter. But most things, even the most cherished, have to give way before the march of invention and improvement. With so many means—hot air, hot water, gas, electricity—of distributing warmth through a building, it will not be possible much longer to adhere to the bearing of this ponderous, grimy coal all over a house, to tolerate the dust caused by the open fire, to be exposed to the confusing downward puff of smoke, which even the most skilfully constructed chimney will sometimes let slip into one's chamber. Our wonted fires, and their ashes too, are unhappily doomed.

The change from the log and fagot crackling on the stones to the compact grate of coals cannot have been a very trying one. The most noteworthy feature of it must have been the necessity which it brought of sitting round the chimney instead of in it, and the greatly increased facilities of working or of amusing one's self afforded by the position of the fire being such that

¹ See the word *grog* in Haydn's Dictionary of Dates.

its warmth could be enjoyed without quitting the table or the lights. I can remember old-fashioned country cottages with capacious chimneys, into the throats of which it was necessary to move if one would revel in the full comfort of the fire. The chimney, as it descended into the room, expanded like the upper parts of a pavilion, and overarched a large recess which was all hearth. The settle was, as I think, always outside in front of the fire, but small seats were placed in the chimney on either side of the fuel: any benumbed wretch who could anchor himself there, and get a branch or two of dried furze thrown on to the red embers while he reposed his feet on the glowing stones, would find it much "pleasanter than Moscow."

But the change from the visible fires to pipes or wires will be far more thorough than that of the flat hearth or the dogs into the containing grate. The characteristics of our race will, as one may suppose, be altogether altered when a Briton can no longer boast of his own fireside. Will meditation, in these latitudes, ever be so pleasant or so profitable when there shall be no fire to softly entrance one? It is little to be doubted that our composers, no matter in what strain, though they may have professed to take their inspiration from the greenwood or from pastures in deference to classical examples, did, most of them, wander into dreamland under the enchantment of a cheering fire more frequently than reclined on the sward and fanned by fresh breezes. "The slighted shepherd's trade," as Milton calls the composition of poetry, has been followed, probably, by a snug fireside near to which no sheep ever found his way except in the guise of mutton. In a warm climate the poet may enjoy his inspiration and

his comfort under a far-spreading beech-tree, and fancy himself a shepherd and his pen a rustic pipe; but a tranquillising fire like this of mine has assisted at the birth of most English poetry. I will, however, confess that there is one English poet who, let the actual truth be as it may (and I daresay he piped and tended sheep as little as any), will always to me appear to have sung his song in view of the scenes which he describes. I used to read his "Pastoral Ballad," attracted by its melody, before, as I think, I could understand a line of it. Little by little, after frequent porings, the meaning began to unfold and to burn itself into my fancy. I never doubted in those days, I do not wish to doubt now, and I refuse to entertain any doubt that may intrude itself, that Shenstone lay inditing his good matter beside his "fountains all bordered with moss" and his banks that were "furnished with bees." The scenes, poet and all, revealed themselves to me in vision, and though my right hand has forgotten much of its cunning, I have never forgotten that lovely landscape. Spite of the glass-papering of the world and the whips and scorns of time, I can still recover the reflection of a fresh and youthful emotion by following mentally Shenstone's familiar chime.

But, behold, it is no longer all barren in the fire! While I have been jotting down my thoughts about grates and fuel, the coals before me have taken intelligible form, and there is the counterfeit presentment of a man, head lowest, falling down, or being washed down, a steep slope into what may be the sea, or perhaps the bottomless pit. It is not unmistakably clear about the "washing down." I think I assumed that, because the

falling person closely resembles a figure which I saw lately in an engraving, where, without doubt, the fall is caused by a torrent, and a pretty powerful one—nothing less than a general deluge. It is not an engraving after any master who has painted *the* deluge. No; this is *a* deluge, one of many; for it is the doctrine of the author of the book containing the engraving, and, as I understand him, of the picture, that deluges have in past times occurred often on the earth at regular intervals of time; and that, for many ages to come, they will periodically recur.

I pause for a moment just to state that, although the writer of the book makes not the slightest allusion to the "bow in the cloud," or to the comforting words, "neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there be a flood any more to destroy the earth," I have not forgotten them. It would, I suppose, be beneath the dignity of modern philosophy to notice in any way the sacred writings; but I am thankful to say that I am not a philosopher, and that I do not anticipate another flood. That being explained, I go on to say that I was a good deal entertained by the book in question,¹ where the theories are ingeniously put and argued. It is the writer's opinion that the waters of this our globe, or the greatest volume of them, pass at regular intervals northward or southward, from one hemisphere to the other. The last rush, which he allows us to call the Noachian deluge, was from north to south; hence we see that the portion of the southern hemisphere covered by water is much more extensive than that so covered

in the northern. But this will be all changed when the next deluge shall occur. Then the waters which now flood the southern hemisphere will roll northward, devastating as they go, discovering southern continents and large islands, but drowning our northern latitudes, and allowing the dry land to appear but sparingly.

Deluges, according to this writer, have occurred, and will occur, every 10,500 years; so that, supposing the last deluge to have been anywhere near where the Scriptural chronology puts it (which supposition he allows), we must be a long way from another cataclysm. The centre of gravity of our globe, as Mr Walker believes, is always shifting by almost imperceptible degrees, from the same causes which produce the nutation of the poles. Then the movement of the centre of gravity causes a variation in the inclination of the axis, all which effects together are of necessity followed by great revolutions in the temperature at the equatorial poles,—the accumulation of cold at one pole, the breaking up of ice at the other,—until the great *bouleversement* takes place, which makes a sweep of nearly everything from hemisphere to hemisphere. He thinks it possible that in some favoured parts of the earth—Central Asia, for example—some very few of the human race may, by climbing the highest mountains, escape with their lives from the deluges; but as all the works of men, and nearly all the species, will have been destroyed, these will have to begin the world again in a destitute and helpless state, which must soon become savage.

No sooner is a deluge accom-

¹ Cyclical Deluges. By William Bassett Walker, M.R.S.V. W. J. Johnson, 121 Fleet Street.

plished, than natural causes begin to make for another in the contrary direction, which causes will consummate their effects a hundred centuries or so further on in time. The writer's mind seems first to have been turned to the thought of these deluges, by pondering the well-known truth that in the crust of the earth are found deposits, it may be of coal, it may be of stone, and so on, one over another, but separated one from another by some well-defined intervening deposits of a different kind, as the so-called "dirt-beds" at Portland Island. Now a force which will carry to almost the same spot the same kind of matter which a similar force has borne thither centuries before, can scarcely have been an accident, but must probably have been generated by a condition of things which comes about in a fixed order, and the consequences of which operate upon almost the same lines as at the former period or periods. One way of explaining these phenomena was by a succession of deluges pouring along in exactly the same directions at long intervals of time, each interval having allowed the accumulation of the dividing matters which separate the great diluvial deposits. Again, the irresistible momentum of a mighty deluge, being sufficient to bear on its billows, and to sweep along with it the bodies of animals as well as much inorganic matter, afforded a plausible explanation of the strange and unnatural neighbourhoods in which these animal remains are found—inhabitants of tropical climates among the ice, and *vice versa*. For a deluge having destroyed terrestrial animal life in the temperate or torrid zone, would have no difficulty in bearing off the carcasses of its victims to arctic or antarctic regions

as the case might be, and in there disposing of them so that the ice might for centuries preserve their forms and avert corruption.

In regard to the profound calculations which have fixed the nature, causes, and times of the cyclical deluges, Mr Walker leans chiefly upon a French *savant* named Alphonse J. Adhemar, who has published a work entitled '*Révolutions de la Mer*,' wherein the circumstances of these deluges are philosophically set forth. I should much incline to the suspicion that neither Mr Walker nor M. Adhemar has got within many degrees of the truth concerning these matters which they both pretend to expound so completely. It will (considering what their subject is) be a marvel if they have grasped the whole of it: if they have not grasped the whole, no wise man will care much for the dreams and fancies which a partially understood subject has suggested.

But all of us are not wise men; nay, if our late howling dervish spake sooth, we are "mostly fools." It is, therefore, not utterly impossible that the ideas which we have noted may find favour with Mr Bradlaugh or some other great leader of men, or that they may evoke an eloquent and learned speech from one of Mr Bradlaugh's friends and supporters who is known to be somewhat fickle as to his convictions; so it may be, for a time, accepted. In that day the almanacs will have to distinguish the year to which they may be adapted, not only as the first, second, or third from the bissextile, or as the bissextile itself, but also as the year of the deluge, or by an ordinal number, varying from one to ten thousand five hundred, and indicating the years that have passed since the last deluge, or that have to pass before the next. And

what an advantage will be enjoyed by the disciples of Mr Walker and M. Adhemar when the next sweep shall come! They are forewarned; and if, therefore, anything may be done with the view of escaping destruction (it is six thousand years off as yet), they may take their measures in time. Stores of provisions and hutting gear may be collected near the peaks of the Himalayas and Andes, or possibly a few Babels may be built in sheltered situations, or strong ironclads constructed by those who prefer to trust themselves to the waters. The simple people of Noah's time were, as we know, utterly improvident. If they had an Adhemar they didn't listen to him, but were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them all away. The thing does not very nearly concern any of the present generation, but we can fancy that there may be much excitement as the time draws near; that war and politics will be treated with unwonted indifference; and that a speech or book, to excite attention, must contain some suggestion "How to weather the deluge."

But I am turned away from deluges by the discovery that my drowning figure anticipatory of the year 8200 or thereabouts has disappeared, and has been succeeded by a Chinaman who is constructed to a much larger scale than the diluvian. His pigtail is beautifully developed; his vesture cunningly variegated, and of unusual brilliancy; to my untutored eye he appears a mandarin, or some very distinguished person. By the general public of this country he would, I opine, be as imperfectly comprehended as by myself. But

surely Chinamen are destined to become much more familiar than they are at present to the average European. With whatever jealousy their Government may endeavour to shut out barbarians with their prying eyes, their people seem disposed to spread freely over barbarian territories. If we may not go to them, they come to us, and so open the way to a more complete understanding between us. Not improbably the unhappy complication which just now threatens a rupture between the French Republic and the brother of the sun and moon, may tend to break down barriers. Whether a little stirring up may, when all shall be taken into account, operate for the benefit of the Celestials, it is hard for a European to determine. But it is not so difficult to see that for France the position which she occupies in regard to China is exceedingly disadvantageous to her general interests. France cannot, for some reason or other, be at rest and enjoy her goods in peace; while every effort which she makes with a view of bettering her position seems to only take her farther from that consideration and prosperity which she is so anxious to enjoy.

The ill-advised actions of which France has been of late rather prolific, produce in foreigners a belief that she has a good deal lost confidence in herself—a failing by no means frequent with her. She is much disposed to imitate the fretful porcupine in sticking out her quills, while conscious, no doubt, that quarrels just now would be highly inconvenient for her. Her dignity is declining, and she is waspish and dangerous. If her unsatisfactory condition had endured but for a short time, it might be set down to an accident, and the cure of it be looked for

at no distant date. But though this or that particular trouble of France may be a passing evil, trouble of some kind has been continually upon her for a hundred years. She has never, since the date of her first great revolution, settled to a stable or lasting form of government, or been able to prosper. Three times since those days has her capital been in the power of a victorious foreign enemy; and the tribulation which has fallen to her through her wars, and through the perversity and restlessness of her people, it would be hard to recount. It was the frantic aspiration of the first Republic to break utterly with the past; not to correct abuses and to improve relations between classes and orders, but to blot out everything which men had been accustomed to respect, and lean to, and shape their lives by. No doubt there was an intention to form a new order of things surpassingly just, benevolent, and admirable; and to clear the stage for this, a wreck was to be made of all things old, the more complete the better. The regenerators had to learn that to construct a system out of chaos is not a simple or easy task. Political and social institutions, however ingeniously conceived, require time to consolidate them and make them fit each other. Old and established things are the only safe foundation on which to build new.

The above considerations, however, seem hardly to occur to revolutionists while they are making the paths straight for their attractive changes. They encounter, of course, opposition from those establishments against which they have declared war; and some of these being very strong and very defensible, resist vigorously, and give a great deal of trouble to the reno-

vating forces. By degrees the resisting bodies occupy the attention of reformers to the exclusion for the present of all plans of reconstruction. It is seen that before any progress can be vaunted in that direction, a clean sweep must be made of these hindrances to the amelioration of government and of society. All the ardour for the new is turned into hatred of the old—of everything that can make the faintest struggle for its own existence. Old things are denounced as abominable,—the condemnation of them is frantic and unscrupulous, and down they go in one vast and common ruin. By-and-by, when all the enemies of revolution have been trodden under foot, it is found that there is nothing firm on which to commence the putting together of the new system. This was the case of the French Revolutionists. They had destroyed something more than the enemies of revolution; they had demolished and scattered the basis and framework on which alone a system could have been built extempore. Emperors tried to build and failed; monarchs tried and failed; republics have tried and failed. The century which has passed since the great overthrow has not sufficed to bring cohesion to the new parts or any of them; and there is nothing to guide our minds in the attempt to discern the term of this relaxation of all wholesome ties. Another century may pass before there can be again an articulated system in that unhappy land. And what may not happen in a century to a disjointed nation resting on the sand! It is a discouraging outlook, but I make it in sadness for the punishment of so near a neighbour and so great a nation.

It is not for us who make so many mistakes, and show before the world as such bunglers in

government, to read lectures to any nation, however demented and perverse. We have got a beam in our own eye which it would be well to cast out before we tender advice to our neighbour. I own to have been considerably disgusted at the language which some of our wiseacres thought proper to employ towards Hungary lately when she had a disturbance in Croatia. From the lofty teachings and superior reflections which were uttered, one might have supposed that they proceeded from the very sun of the European system,—from the light which is to lighten all nations after proving the infallibility of its doctrines by brilliant success in the management of its affairs at home. No one could suppose that the sermons came from a nation whose Government has shown itself to be utterly helpless in dealing with disaffection—one which may profitably take a lesson from Hungary. For Hungary disposed of her difficulty in a month from the time of its outbreak; and she did so in a manner which by no means justifies any country in thanking God on her. She has not refused investigation of grievances; she has not hesitated to make concessions; *but* before she investigated or conceded, she put down open resistance to the law. Had she been guided by a long-tongued minister whom I could name, the whole Austro-Hungarian monarchy would have been in a blaze ere this.

But I have run a little off the line, and must return to it. I was saying that we have no right to preach to France, but may well take a caution from her experience. Our so-called reformers are getting much into the disposition into which France fell when she made such a wreck of herself. They are postponing the considera-

tion and introduction of their great projects until after they shall have laid low every institution and interest which may be likely to object to any of them. In the meantime they endeavour to direct the wrath of the whole community against these time-seasoned bequests of our forefathers. Unless their career should be interrupted, there is much reason to apprehend that they will root out everything, as was done in France. Injurious as such a course has proved to be in France, it would be ten times worse—it would be absolutely destructive—in Great Britain. The generous soil and climate of France enable her to bear political and social diseases for long, without positively succumbing to them. She can feed a large part, if not the whole, of her population; her winters, especially in the south, are shorter and less severe than ours. It is pretty certain, therefore, that we, if we should be perverse enough to foment the pulling-down frenzy, and to destroy our old landmarks and moorings, could not even flounder along, trying project after project of government to no purpose, but nevertheless maintaining a place among the nations, as France has done. Our soil will not keep us. We must be organised, united, and governed according to discreet methods, or we are lost. There is little opportunity for experimenting in government here; by the time we reach our second political collapse, we shall be very near to national extinction!

There is one feature of the French Revolution which Englishmen would do well to lay to heart. I mean the shameless impiety which characterised it. It is a wickedness of which we, as a nation, were, in old days, not often guilty; but, unhappily, we have become of late very tolerant (to say the least) not only of

unbelief, but of open indecent insults to religion. There are many reflecting people who say that, however we may connect the consequent sufferings and failures in the French to their perverse and ruinous political action at the time of the Revolution, it is really due to the impious conduct which was not at all necessary to the political overthrow, but was paraded and vaunted in wanton outrage. Now if these persons who thus think have any reason on their side, here is a particular, by imitating France wherein, we largely increase our chance of encountering the same calamities as France. If we cannot be restrained from pulling down politically and socially, at least let us beware how we add to our danger by proclaiming ourselves impious and rebellious against divine as well as terrestrial order. In this year which is now ending, we have barely saved ourselves from publicly and nationally affirming our willingness to receive among our legislators and rulers men who profess atheism and are guilty of most scurrilous attacks upon all that Christians hold sacred. There is no sense in even running the risk of bringing a curse upon ourselves for such an object as this.

But I have written my Chinaman out. There is not a trace of him left, and a bit of coal hitherto quiescent having quickened into flame just below where his august person was lately presented, there is no chance of a transfiguration in that locality, only a blaze which operates like the fall of the curtain in a theatre and terminates the scenes. Howbeit a fire, like nature, possesses creative as well as destructive power. The mandarin and his predecessors have certainly finished their *tableaux*, and the place thereof shall know them no

more just now. But while they have been leaving the scene a new series of phantasms has begun elsewhere; and as it is in the world, so here—death on one hand and birth on the other. Yes—it was all black, dull, and uncommunicative away here to my right, while I was being coached from near the centre; now I find that, the direct line of images having failed, this collateral branch is destined to carry on the phantasmagorial succession. A red spot has quietly commenced and expanded till now it displays shadows, distances, and profound recesses—a cavernous Cyclopean scene; neither does it want the animation which is required to fully attract to it my attention. For there is just emerging from darkness a mysterious figure, about to plunge, as it would seem, into and across a stream of fire. One extended arm holds a weapon, the other, palm backwards, is behind the waist, signalling, perchance, to some comrade to follow with caution. I said that the figure is mysterious, because I can make out no feature, no face even, though there is a proportionate head. I think of the man in the iron mask, but cannot quite tell what he should be doing in the circumstances. Then it occurs that it may be an impersonation of Junius, whom Byron called an “epistolary iron mask”; but neither does this solution satisfy. At last I say pettishly, “Why go to history or to poetry for the meaning? It is a prosaic agent of simple everyday (or every night) life. It is an armed burglar with a mask on—of course it is. He is leading the way to or from some deed of robbery, probably of blood, and is inculcating caution on his follower or followers. A miscreant of this kind has had a fine time lately, with every chance on his side, and none

on that of the law. Opportunity given him to escape, perhaps after shooting a policeman or the owner of the property which he has seized; and his punishment, if by any chance he may have been captured, ridiculously light.

I must say that I have read with satisfaction of the intention to arm the police with revolvers, so that they may have some chance in encounters with armed ruffians. There has been great hesitation about letting the police carry these weapons; and all the argument on the subject that I have seen, has been on the question whether the officer may be trusted not to use his pistol until there shall be proof that the burglar really means to effect his purpose, or his escape, at all hazards. This question has been decided by nearly every one that has handled it, in favour of arming the police; because, say the reasoners, even if the constable should draw trigger a trifle too quickly, he only shoots down a burglar, saves the law a great deal of trouble, and does an appreciable service to quiet and respectable people. It seems to me, however, that if the question were only between the police and armed burglars—that is to say, if there were no other and less dangerous criminals obnoxious to the interference of the police, there would have been very little argument at all; the arming of the police would have been conceded as an obvious and indispensable means of defence. But when once we have given the constable powder and shot, how can we be certain that he will use his advantage against burglars only? That he may not be tempted now and then to “pot” some troublesome rascal, whose crime, if the worst view were taken of it, could hardly be deserving of death or wounds?

This consideration, of the exposing criminals of milder type to official fire, is what has really caused us to hesitate, and the hesitation so accounted for may be owned to be proper. For constables, after all, are only human beings, as our cooks and nurses could certify, and as we frequently discover through channels which are neither culinary nor nutritious; and the possibility ought not to be overlooked of their discharging upon some riotous or other misde-meanant who might be making off successfully, or even upon some sharp-tongued railer who might, from a point of vantage, intolerably reflect upon the honour of guardians of the public peace.

I venture to say, however, that we run no great risk in trusting to the discretion of the constables. They are admirably instructed as to their duty in dealing with criminals; they know the tenderness towards scoundrels of all kinds which is in fashion at present; and they are much more likely to err on the side of unreadiness than on that of rashness. The patience and coolness which they, in a majority of trying cases, are found to exhibit, warrant us in making the experiment, the progress of which may be carefully watched. It will soon be apparent whether or not the force has become at all dangerous; and, as a set-off against the small chance of their proving to be so, we have the certainty that their carrying arms will immediately operate as a heavy blow and great discouragement to a class of villains who undoubtedly are dangerous to life as well as to property.

I am not, as I presume, the only person to whom has occurred, while he was thinking of this subject, the question, “Why should we not make burglary committed

under the shelter of deadly weapons a capital offence? If we may trust the constable to deal capitally with the burglar, why may we not trust the judge to the same extent?" It has been very commonly said during the discussion of the matter, that the burglar's mere knowledge of the police being armed will have a deterrent effect. I quite believe that it will. The apprehension that he may lose his life in the encounter, may cause the rascal to decline the burglary, or at least the contest. Now if this reasoning be good, the apprehension that he may lose his life by the halter, even if he should escape the Peeler's barrel, would surely make him still more cautious. We have got so far as to look complacently on flogging the burglar as we do the garotter,—a mode of dealing with him, when not thought to be deserving of death, which I entirely approve. But let us take the other important step of hanging the burglar outright whenever the circumstances of his crime may appear to be more than usually atrocious. Why on earth should we be squeamish about taking the lives of such transgressors?

Robbery has of late been unfortunately not monopolised by burglars. Burglars might, in mitigation of their offences, offer the unsound plea that they rob for subsistence, assuming the correctness of Falstaff's dictum that "young men must live," although the necessity is by no means apparent, but rather the contrary, when young men choose to live by burglary. They may, however, be sometimes driven to crime by want. But we have been shocked of late by the extensive robberies committed by men who not only were not in want, but who were filling offices or conducting busi-

nesses which paid them well. Not content with good incomes, but making haste to be rich, they have rushed into crime, caring but little, as it appeared, at whose expense they made their speculations. We are presented with but a sickening view of humanity when well-to-do men cannot be trusted with the custody, or even the sight, of that which is their neighbour's without endeavouring to appropriate it. We are compelled to think deliberately pretty much what King David said in his haste, and to adopt as rules of life the maxims of ancient Pistol—

"Let senses rule; the word is *pitch and pay*;
Trust none;
For oaths are straws, men's faiths are
wafer-cakes,
And hold-fast is the only dog, my
duck;
Therefore *caveto* be thy counsellor."

But when Briton can no longer trust Briton, Britain must cease to be a commercial nation. From certain remarks which have been let fall during the past autumn by persons who should be well informed as to such matters, the commercial prosperity of the country is not what it was a few years ago; and, unfortunately, there are only too many signs that this opinion is correct. Money to be had exceptionally cheap, but no spirit to embark money in any enterprise. I have heard it said that it is next to impossible to raise funds for a joint-stock company; and any one may read, day by day, the complaints that are made from the City that no business is being done on the Stock Exchange. To me it has been said (I know not whether correctly or not) that, the profits of business being very meagre, traders require for present wants all that they make, and have no surplus to invest. I hope that

things are not quite so bad as that; but no one can deny that if there be any money to put to the exchangers, it is being disposed of in a mysterious manner. Often I have my fears that it is being used to make up the shortcomings of those who, either as proprietors or tenants, are interested in the land. We know that many things have of late been operating adversely to the land—not the least among which is the bitter hostility to landed proprietors which is cherished in many quarters. “Ye are grand jurors, are ye? I’ll jure ye i’ faith,” though it was Shakespeare’s expression, and therefore an ancient one, seems accurately to interpret in the present day the sentiment of a large class. Land-owners are likely to be secret about pecuniary difficulties, so that the disposal of money which they may be absorbing as loans would not be patent to all the world. Hence, as we can perceive no other explanation of the stagnation of business, I am fain to think there must be extensive borrowing on the security of land. If this be so, we are silently and imperceptibly, but by a decline which cannot readily be retrieved, growing poorer. None of us can clearly foresee the effect upon the country generally of the land losing its value, or a large part of its value. A commercial crisis we can take the measure of; for it is a not unknown occurrence, and there is a way out of it as well as into it. But who shall say what may happen if the soil of Britain, the excellency of her strength, the heart of her enterprise, should become of small account? I cannot help thinking that such a misfortune would, among its earliest effects, be most injurious to many

of those who at this moment are most splenetic and malignant against a territorial aristocracy.

But I have very little inclination (being at length moderately warm and exceedingly comfortable) to discuss fretful questions; and even were I disposed to altercation, Christmas is not the season for reviewing animosities and feuds. Until human nature shall be radically changed, there will ever be, in all communities, certain matters on which sections will differ and actively oppose each other. There are times and seasons when the contentions caused by such disagreements will inevitably have way, but this is not their hour. And, happily, if we must be divided as to some things, there are many other things as to which we all think alike. I believe—I am thankful to believe—that those of us who have this world’s goods are entirely of one mind and of one intention just now as to distributing to them who have need. However ready they may be, when they fancy their rights challenged or invaded, to “quarrel on the ninth part of a hair,” they will be found, as I think, when left to the promptings of their own hearts,

“Open as day to melting charity.”

Our variances will force themselves to the front quite soon enough, but we can well afford to have a month’s truce just now, and to let peace and—— * * * *

Dear me! how is this? My writing is quite dry, and the clock is three-quarters advanced since I looked at it, as seems to me only a minute ago. Can I have been asleep?

NOT UNTIL NEXT TIME.

"I DREAMED that we were lovers still,
As tender as we used to be,
When I brought you the daffodil,
And you looked up, and smiled at me."

"True sweethearts were we then indeed,
When youth was budding into bloom;
But now the flowers are gone to seed,
And breezes have left no perfume."

"Because you ever, ever, will
Take such a crooked view of things,
Distorting this and that, until
Confusion ends in cavillings."

"Because you never, never, will
Perceive the force of what I say;
As if I always reasoned ill—
Enough to take one's breath away!"

"But what, if riper love replace
The vision that enchanted me,
When all you did was perfect grace,
And all you said was melody?"

"And what, if loyal heart renew
The image, never quite foregone,
Combining, as of yore, in you
A Samson and a Solomon?"

"Then to the breezes will I toss
The straws we split, with temper's loss,
And seal upon your lips anew
The peace that gentle hearts ensue."

"Oh, welcome then, ye playful ways,
And sunshine of the early days,
And banish to the clouds above
Dull reason, that bedarkens love!"

R. D. BLACKMORE.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART IV.

CHAPTER XIV.—TEMPTED BY OPPORTUNITY.

"Opportunity creates a sinner : at least it calls him into action, and, like the warming sun, invites the sleeping serpent from his hole."—OWEN FELTHAM.

WE left Teddy Lessingham and his sick friend on the threshold of Lady Matilda's own snug little sitting-room, the recipients of a warm and unexpected welcome.

The two great big unmannerly fellows stood agape at the extent of their good fortune, and it was Matilda herself who pushed round the arm-chair for Mr Challoner to sit in ; it was her hands which piled up the wood-fire, and placed a screen in front of the invalid ; while at the same time questions, condolences, and congratulations fell musically upon his ear.

Teddy's spirits rose on the instant. "This is jolly," he said ; "I do hope we shall have no one else come in ; Robert or anybody ; I expect it is too bad for other people. Hitchin was right about your not going down-stairs, Challoner—it is much pleasanter here ; even when it rains there is always something to look at from this window ; and I don't know how it is, but I do like small rooms better than large ones. Now, Challoner, don't you ?"

"An unfair question." It was his sister who answered. "A shabby, impertinent, home-thrusting question, and not to be repeated. Mr Challoner being in my room, and in my *small* room, shall not be called upon to prefer it to any other. I will not have him so ill treated. He has been wounded in our service,—oh yes, that was certainly the case,—wounded, and is now in hospital, or, as seamen say, in dock for repairs. He is to be repaired under careful supervision ;

he is to be tenderly dealt with ; Teddy shall not——"

"I'm as good to him as ever I can be !" cried Teddy, staring.

The next point was, did Mr Challoner feel quite warm ? Did he feel any draught ?

He felt no draught, he felt a delicious sense of luxury in mind and body, he felt that he was yielding to a spell which had already begun to work, and against which he could no longer struggle ; and he felt that, come what might, for good or for evil, he would not now be anywhere else for the world.

He might be a fool ? He would be a fool, then. He might be worse ? Worse, then : so be it.

He had not of his own accord come to this enchanted spot, and stepped within the magic circle, but he had been brought thither against his will, by a fate which, so he told himself, had been too powerful for him,—so now he would have it out with fate, and see which was the winner in the game ; he would not again try to escape, but he himself would dare himself, and dare the worst himself could do.

Throughout the past week he had been casting about in his mind how to evade this moment. He had never meant to see Matilda again, should he once turn his back on the grim walls of Overton Hall ; he had seen once, and it had been enough ; ever since the night on which she had knelt by his side, clasping her hands upon his arm, with her lovely, weary, patient face turned from him, and her ringing

voice silent to him, and no smiles for him, and no eyes for him, he had never had her image far from his fancy. He told himself that he had escaped by the skin of his teeth. That had he been in Whewell's place—the favoured Whewell's place—he had fallen a victim far, far more mortally wounded than Whewell had been. Whewell? Pah! How could he, or such as he, appreciate a Matilda?

And Matilda's fair form night and day, sometimes beautiful and gracious, sometimes frowning and scornful, but mingled ever with that of another, had run through and through, and twisted subtly in and out of every feverish vision—Matilda, always Matilda,—and always Matilda beheld with love, distress, and shame.

If he had only gone while those feelings prevailed! If only that miserable doctor had not been suffered to interfere and bar the door with his preposterous dictums! Tempting a man who was doing what he could to escape from temptation; drawing back a man into the flames who was flying from fire!

Well, it was all over now; it was at an end now; it was of no use looking back and lamenting over what might have been. He would stand aloof no longer; the gods were against it: here he was, fast bound, losing not a note of the soft voice, a fall of the dark eyelash, a turn of the graceful head; here he was, drinking in with every sense the draught that should have been to him a deadly poison, breathing the fumes of the intoxicating cup, bending over it, clasping it in his arms,—here he was, and here he would remain; he had thrown up the contest for the nonce, overpowered.

And this was the unobserving, indiscriminating, passive, stony

Challoner: this the discreet friend; the uninteresting and uninterested man; the over-modest stranger, who now stood in such excellent contrast to the over-bold one. No, my lady, you are the very least bit out in your calculations this time. Talk away; it is all very nice and simple, isn't it? Mr Whewell may come now if he chooses, may he not? Whewell is the person to be thought about; Whewell has to be cold-shouldered unfortunately; and Whewell should have known better, and he is a troublesome fellow, and must be got rid of: but poor Mr Challoner, who is so good and so cold, and who has been so very, very badly used, he shall see now that Matilda can own herself in the wrong, and is not ashamed to show it.

And she does show it, and she has never shown to greater advantage in her life.

"If only those *Endhills* will stop away now," inwardly comments Teddy, observant and delighted. "If only this hurricane will keep up and blow them all in at their own door, should they ever attempt to come out of it! Challoner gets on first-rate with Matilda to-day; how they are talking! That chap can talk, I see, when he chooses. We shall have them quite good friends directly, and then he can stay on as long as he likes."

Meantime his sister's thoughts ran thus: "Well, now I see the man, he is not at all disagreeably ugly. His eyes are grey and soft; I rather like them; they do not look very clever or penetrating—but then we cannot all be clever and penetrating. They look nice good quiet eyes,—not suggestive, perhaps, not capable of a vast amount of damage, but very well in their way; quite up to the rest of the face in fact."

The rest of the face was nothing

much to boast of: skin, dark-red and sunburnt; nose, hard and a little crooked; mouth, large, steady, and slightly drawn down at the corners; the mild and pensive expression of the whole just dashed by a certain squareness and ruggedness of the chin, which seemed out of harmony if one had time to think about it, but which was usually overlooked by the people who characterised Mr Challoner as a quiet-looking man.

He had neither moustache, beard, nor whiskers, although his hair, which was of no particular shade of dusky colour, grew so closely round the temples that it suggested these would have been easily forthcoming, and would have been good of their kind. The head was well shapen, and well set on a pair of magnificent shoulders.

All of this was for the first time manifest to Lady Matilda. Until now she had seen Challoner without seeing him; she had been conscious of a lay figure somewhere behind other people, of a dim outline tall enough and broad enough to block up half the window at Endhill, and of a somewhat coarse, and, as she had then fancied it, stolid visage, now and then coming into the focus when she had looked at random up and down the table on the occasion of her last dinner-party. Afterwards she had contemplated the face with a shudder, when her own excited imagination had run riot over the accident, and that had been all; to the real Challoner not a moment's attention had been given.

Now, however, he was to be treated differently. "See," said the hostess, pointing to a piece of needlework on an antique screen in front of her,—"see, Mr Challoner, I must tell you the story of this. This is a fine piece of old tapestry, worked, it is said, by one

of my very greatest of great-grandmothers. Good lady, she must have had little time for anything else, if all the work in this house wherewith she is accredited, really and truly was done by her. Now, look at this piece. These are Moors: here sits the Moorish king among his beauties; that one is the favourite, or has been the favourite so far, but you see he now turns from her and bestows his royal attention elsewhere, on this damsel with the musical instrument in her hand, which he is pointing to as he presses her to play and sing. She is willing enough, I should say, smiling and nodding her consent; but the other, the neglected fair one, is very much put out indeed, and a fit of the sulks is to my mind inevitable. What do you think? Am I right? Is his Moorish majesty to have a bad time of it; or will the lady pocket her affront, and be content to play when she is asked in her turn, but to play—second fiddle?"

"An awkward position certainly, Lady Matilda." Challoner looked calmly in the speaker's face. "A bad business. The king should—should have managed better."

"Oh, poor man, that is being too severe! 'How happy could he be with either!' you know; but that is what a man never does know, and never will learn. A woman is different; she is less exorbitant, less exacting. One lover, that is to say, one whole lover, one lover all to herself, suffices her. Of course she does not like to share him—witness this scene," nodding to the picture; "but then that is only fair. Who would have an eye or an ear of a man with two eyes and two ears?"

"You think she should have all or nothing."

"Precisely ; all or nothing."

"Yet, Lady Matilda, half a loaf is better than no bread."

"Better, indeed ! What a base idea, Mr Challoner ! Half such a loaf as that too," indicating the luckless Moor. "No, indeed ; the fair one is not so simple as to content herself with a paltry share, and no more would any true woman."

"You would not, I bet," said Teddy, finding at last something to understand in all this. "I pity the poor beggar who tries it on with you."

"We are not talking of me, dear ; we are talking about pictures, or rather about this trumpety imitation of one," yawned his sister, pushing back the screen. "There, Moor, retire to oblivion." But Teddy had been cogitating as she spoke.

"It's all very fine for Matilda to talk," observed he now to Challoner ; "she pretends to be down on other women, but she wouldn't

like it herself. She can't stand anybody interfering with her——"

——"My dear boy, take your elbows out of my lap," impatiently.

"And if a fellow made up to her and to any one else at the same time," proceeded Teddy, doggedly bent on a hearing——

——"Nonsense !" cried Matilda, with a frown.

"Oh, it's very well to say 'nonsense,' but the very devil's in you,—oh, I say, you are not going?"

She was, with tears in her eyes ; but they brought her back, and placed her again between them, and Teddy knelt at her feet, and Challoner begged for forgiveness as though he too had offended, and the ruffled brow smoothed again, and the burning cheek cooled as the afternoon wore on, and seemed only to wear too fast away. But it was curious that the trifling episode was destined never altogether to pass from the minds of two of those present.

CHAPTER XV.—HOPING STILL.

"There are none so blind as those that will not see."

Wind and rain could not continue for ever, so that although there was no abatement of the blast which still howled and moaned among the ocean cliffs, and whistled over the bare unprotected downs above, there was on the following day a decided cessation of the torrents which had hitherto poured down as it had seemed from exhaustless fountains.

Towards afternoon, indeed, the clouds ceased to empty themselves at all, and scurried harmlessly across the sky, leaving here and there openings through which gleams of pale sunlight stole ; and thus it came to pass that, after

repeated tappings of the barometer, and investigations from the front door, Mr Frank Whewell at length found himself in a position to point out that there was nothing to prevent any one—any one, at least, with thick boots and a great-coat—from indulging in a good walk. A good walk would do them both good—the "both" referring to his friend Hanwell and himself, and the "good walk" being of course to Overton Hall.

As the weather had really improved, and as nothing could be brought forward on the other hand, host and hostess were graciously pleased to approve the proposal—

Robert not unwilling himself to escape from four walls and Sunday magazines, and Lotta to hear what was going on at the other house.

Moreover, she affirmed that as nothing had been heard of Mr Challoner for a whole day, and as he was still *their* guest, though detained by misfortune elsewhere, it would be only right to look after his welfare. To have gone the day before, that frightful day, would have been foolish,—it would have been more, an unnecessary attention, since Mr Whewell had called at Overton on the Friday, and had sat an hour in Mr Challoner's room; but as no one had gone yesterday, and as no messenger had come over from the Hall either, she must own she thought it a good arrangement for the two gentlemen to walk thither now, inquire after the invalid, and find out when he would be able to return to Endhill. Return to Endhill he certainly must, to complete his visit.

Mr Whewell joyfully undertook to satisfy her, both as friend and hostess. He had been in his own mind bitterly indignant with Lotta all the evening before, considering that to her more than to Robert he owed it that he had been prevented going to Lord Overton's as usual: Lotta had stood out against all his representations and entreaties, had assured him she had no anxiety for tidings, and no desire to send messages; and he had not been able even to make her see that her mother and uncles would expect him.

She had been sure that they would not expect him, and had, indeed, told her husband apart that what would be said would be this, that they were unable to amuse their own guest for a single day, and that he had been driven to Overton from sheer dearth of entertainment at home. This had

touched Robert's weakest part, and he too had strenuously set himself against the going, so that a dull and sullen evening had been spent, and an equally uncongenial morning had followed, until the first lucky break in the clouds had induced the resolute barrister to make his proposition afresh. It had been met amiably, and he was at once restored to good-humour.

He was now anxious to wipe out of everybody's recollection the fact that he had previously been annoyed and had shown his annoyance; and so well did he succeed, and so entirely was peace restored, that Mrs Hanwell sent her love twice over, and begged Mr Whewell to remember to tell her mother that she would *not* be at home on Wednesday, and *would* be at home on Thursday, should Lady Matilda say anything about coming over.

All smooth behind: now forward; now for Overton.

"And what did you do with yourselves yesterday? How did you pass the time yesterday?" he began with animation, the first greetings past. "We had a miserable day of it," aside to Lady Matilda. "You pitied us, I hope? Our only consolation was that you were pitying us, as we were you; we were in sympathy, at all events. But how wretched it was! Hanwell and I had had enough of each other hours before dinner-time; and I am sure Mrs Hanwell wished us both anywhere else. Had it rested with me," lower still, "had it been left to me, I need hardly say where I should have been."

"Back in London, of course," rejoined she, easily; "back in your dear Pall Mall and Piccadilly. No one blames you," as he looked denial; "no one expects anything else. London people can scarcely be supposed to enter into the de-

lights of a really wet day in the country; I do not mean a half-and-half wet day, when it rains and clears and rains again, but a perfectly hopeless, eventless, dead-and-buried wet day, without the chance of a visitor, or the sound of the door-bell——”

“I know—I know. But,” said Whewell, delighted, “your door-bell would have rung once at least yesterday, if I had had my will. I protested as much as I could; I did indeed. And could I have, —I mean, would Mr and Mrs Hanwell have allowed it, I should have been in the body where I already was in the spirit—here.”

“Here? Oh no. We never” —Lady Matilda opened her eyes, and drew herself up ever so slightly —“never expected any of you. Had you come here, you would have wished yourself back again, I assure you. You like lively doings, and there was nothing going on here—nothing amusing to bring you. We did not even go into the billiard-room; we just sat round the fire and talked.”

“And yawned in each other’s faces.”

“Yawned? Well, no; I do not think we did yawn; I have no recollection of yawning.”

“You were not so ill-mannered: you only wished you could have taken the liberty, instead of taking it; you said as we did, ‘When, oh, when, will it be—dinner-time?’”

“I doubt if we made the remark,” said Matilda, drily.

“Challoner is all right again, I see,” continued her companion, after a momentary pause. “Is this—I presume this is his first appearance down-stairs?”

“Down-stairs; yes. He sat in the boudoir yesterday; the doctor thought he ought not to go down-stairs, the day was so bad.”

“For fear of a chill, you know.

In a large house like this there are so many passages,” responded Whewell, conversant with everything; “where you have so many passages there must be draughts, and, of course, about dinner-time all the spring-doors would be open. I—ah—I suppose Challoner only got up at dinner-time?”

“Oh no; he was up in his room all day, I believe, and he came into the boudoir about four.”

“And you were all there till eight?”

“We were; we were all there till eight. And after eight, too; we returned there for the evening.”

“Oh!”

“Even Overton made one of the party. You may imagine how we were flattered; at least *you* may not imagine, as you don’t know Overton, but to any one else that would tell its own tale.”

“Of Lord Overton’s boredom?”

“Oh dear, no; of our agreeability. Overton never is bored—I mean by his own company; and therein lay the compliment. He sought us out, actually sought us out, of his own choice and for his own benefit.”

“You were a merry party then, it seems?” He was not to be disconcerted.

“Very. We usually are.”

“It was not Mr Challoner’s doing then?”

Whether she heard or not he could not be sure; she was appealed to at the moment, and responded to the appeal, and let Mr Whewell’s playfulness pass; and after all, it did not signify, he considered, since whatever cause he might have to feel chagrined at the cheery aspect which Lady Matilda persisted in giving to reminiscences in which he had had no share, it would have been absurd to be jealous of Challoner. She might choose

to torment him, but she would never take any notice of Challoner; and as being tormented was many degrees better than being let alone, he presently plucked up spirit to try again.

"We are not in the little room to-day," he said.

"We are too large a number to-day," replied the lady.

"Might we not make an adjournment? Some of us, at least?"

"And for that, we are again too small a number."

"It is unfortunate. We are only two more than yesterday."

"Two too many." But Lady Matilda smiled, and it was impossible to tell how much was meant.

"You are—are terribly exact, I perceive," rejoined Whewell, trying to laugh; "are you always so? Would one more, for instance, have been too many yesterday?"

"Well, you could have had no chair, you know."

"I should have been *de trop*, evidently."

"You could have been accommodated with a footstool."

"At your feet?"

Again she had to affect not to hear; she was determined not to quarrel with the man. He was going on the morrow—she had heard Robert say he was going on the morrow—and to hold on only a little longer would not be hard.

"Well, no," said Matilda, pleasantly; "I think, after all, I should have yielded you my chair. I think that if there had been four gentlemen I should have been the person *de trop*; I should have had to make my exit, and leave you and the other three in possession of the field. You must own, Mr Whewell, that four to one is too many, altogether too many; as it was——"

"Your party was complete?" He was scanning her keenly.

No, she would not go as far as that. "The room was full, quite another thing," said Matilda; "but happily there are more rooms than one in the house, and no one need pretend that he was not wanted," with a charming smile, "because he was lazy and preferred staying indoors to a tiresome disagreeable wet walk."

"Indeed, indeed," began Whewell, earnestly.

"Oh dear me, there is nothing to 'indeed' about. Why, Mr Whewell, cannot you see that I was jesting? Pray do not look so serious; you appal me."

He began to feel appalled himself. "I am sorry to offend you, Lady Matilda."

"I grant you my pardon, Mr Whewell." With her finest mock curtsy she laughed in his face, and he thought he had never seen any one more incomprehensible. "Come," continued she, throwing off the look the next instant—"come, let us understand each other. My son-in-law has, I perceive, been infecting you with some of his notions as to the exactions of propriety. He and you have already been beyond praise in the way you have done your duty by your sick friend—Robert's sick friend, I mean—and still your consciences are not satisfied, because you failed to come over in a deluge yesterday, when no sensible person would ever have thought of setting foot outside; when none of us did" (she had forgotten Teddy, but perhaps Teddy could hardly be reckoned a sensible person), "and when we should not have thought very highly of—to be precisely truthful—of you or Robert if you had. In short, nothing would have amazed us more than to see you walk in," added she, happily oblivious at the moment of another fact—namely, that

she had listened throughout most of the afternoon, and through a part of it in what was almost an agony of apprehension, for his approaching step, and that she had only dared to give him up when darkness had fairly set in.

At last she felt that she had disposed of the question, and had done so without abating a hair's-breadth of her dignity and sweetness, and without, she hoped, giving more pain than was absolutely necessary. That she had given some was a matter of course—he had forced it from her; and his now saying nothing further showed that he was suffering.

"Are they to be asked to stay dinner?" presently whispered Teddy in her ear. "Eh? I can't hear. Are they?"

"As Overton likes," replied his sister, indifferently.

"Are they, or are they not? What do you mean? Who is to know what Overton likes?"

"Let him ask them."

"Him? Overton?"

"Yes."

"Am I to tell him to ask them?"

"Oh dear, Teddy, yes; I tell you, yes. I think he had better. I think it would be better. Go you and tell him. But pray do not show that you come straight from me; it will make it seem at once as if it were all my doing, which is just what I do not want it to be," cried poor Matilda, under her breath. "Mr Whewell is looking at us now."

And Mr Whewell was; and it was all as plain as day to him—or he thought it was—when, a very few minutes afterwards, he noted Lord Overton drawn aside in Teddy's most diplomatic fashion, and charged with an invitation which was fired off on the instant. His depressed spirits rose on elastic springs once more, and all Matilda's work had to be done over again.

CHAPTER XVI.—MATILDA WOULD HAVE PROVOKED A SAINT.

"Must then your faithful swain expire,
And not one look obtain,
Which he, to soothe his fond desire,
Might pleasingly obtain?
(Phyllis, without frown or smile,
Sat and knotted all the while.)"

—SEDLAY.

As to declining, it was not to be thought of. Without hesitation every objection was disposed of as it appeared. They had dined, certainly they had dined, and dined most plentifully in the middle of the day, and one o'clock was quite the correct hour for Sunday in the country no doubt. He wished for no more dinner, assuredly for no more *dinner*; but if Lord Overton were good enough to desire their *company*, that was another thing. And then how very glad, how devoutly thankful Mrs Hanwell

would be to be rid of them for a little longer; it would be quite a charity, quite a Sunday deed, to take two such malcontents off the poor lady's hands. And as to the dark night? It was already dark, it would be no darker four hours hence; and as he spoke he fixed his bright black penetrating eyes keenly, and amorously, and exultingly on Lady Matilda. That look undid him; she wondered how she could ever have found Mr Whewell agreeable, even tolerably agreeable; and in the revulsion that had now

set in, was almost ready to hope that she would never set eyes upon him again.

Never, at least, would she meet his.

On his part, Whewell fancied that his present alacrity and persistency was setting to rights whatever had been wrong before, and that, supposing Lady Matilda had (as was likely enough in spite of her making-believe to the contrary), been piqued by his neglect on the previous day, she should now see that neither Robert's obstinacy nor anything else should force him from her side. He would shirk no discomforts for her sake; and since she had even gone out of her way to make her brother give the invitation instead of doing it herself, she should lose nothing by her modest coyness.

He stayed alone. Robert, true to himself and Lotta, could not be persuaded, and at length, rather to his amazement and much to his discomfort, found himself trudging back through mud and mire, companionless, both his cherished guests left behind, both deserters, both irreclaimable. His suggestion that Challoner should now renew his visit to Endhill had been scouted by Teddy, and even met by something like warmth on the part of Lord Overton. "Go? nonsense!" the latter had exclaimed. "We like your friend Challoner, and he seems to like us, and as we don't see many people, you have done us a good turn in bringing him here. He is going to stop on a bit, and as soon as his hand gets all right he can shoot. There is nothing to take him away." And with this his nephew had been obliged to be content.

He had no reason to complain; that Challoner and Whewell had each been in his way a success was doubtless gratifying: but still

there was something in Challoner's looking so much at home, so calm and still and imperturbable and comfortable in the corner of the big sofa by the fire, so entirely as if he were *their* man—Matilda's, Overton's, and Teddy's—that, considering none of them had ever seen him ten days before, and that it was not to visit *them* but *him*, and to be godfather to *his* baby, that Challoner had come, there was something in all this, in the baby's having fallen so completely into the background, and in the present oblivion of all that had been so prominent before, that seemed to turn the whole affair topsy-turvy.

From the very beginning things had worked oddly,—he would not say even to himself amiss, but oddly, incongruously. First had been the hasty and ill-timed appearance of the brother and sister at Endhill, then Lady Matilda's absurd preference for Whewell over Challoner, then Challoner's unfortunate accident, and finally, Whewell's protracted stay. Now here they were both at Overton, both enthroned at Overton, able to do without him at Overton, in clover, and clover which he had not provided, at Overton; and here was he, neither sharing the welcome nor the good cheer to which he had been the stepping-stone, suffered to depart hungry and cheerless, and with the chance of being wet through, on his weary and solitary homeward way.

It was hard on Robert, but perhaps Whewell had not a very much better time of it in the Overton drawing-room.

He did not know how it was that he did not get on better: Matilda neither shunned him nor frowned on him, and yet he seemed to lose ground with her every hour. With her brother also: Lord Overton had never been jovial, but now

he passed the wine with scarcely a remark, while Teddy only seemed to brighten at all when he again volunteered the useful T-cart.

Certainly the thing—he knew what he meant—the thing was not to be done this time; he should have to come again—to come as soon as he could, and with the best face he could; and with this conviction he must give all his attention now to concealing his disappointment and keeping up appearances to the last. It was no easy task, and took all his tactics. He said to himself that Matilda would have provoked a saint, and that he was no saint, and that she ought to have known it; but it did not occur to him that she did know it, and that the winning manner, the instantaneous turning to him when he took a seat near, the hoping that he would have better sport another time—that next autumn, if he were down in the neighbourhood, the birds would be more plentiful,—good heavens! next autumn, to a man who wished to come down next week!—that all of this, which was just what he did not want, and could have done without, was a woman's defensive armour donned on purpose. More and more gloomy grew his brow, and more and more sweet and gracious and queenlike grew her smile.

She saw that she was doing it nicely.

She could not have done it more nicely. He was biting his lip with vexation at the last; and yet he feared and hated the parting hour. It seemed as if, did he let her go now, he should never get near Matilda again.

It was a wild night, and scarce a star was visible in the perturbed and disordered heavens. "We shall get along famously," said Teddy. "The roads will be as soft as butter after all this rain.

I can take you round by the downs if you like, only we might find a tree or two down across our way; perhaps we had better not. Are you ready, for the mare is a bad one to stand?"

Whewell was ready. That was to say, he had said his "Good-bye," and had failed in saying more; he had received no future invitation; he had elicited no regret; and he had had to feel a cheerful shake of his hand when he had meant to impart a doleful pressure. Matilda's whole aspect throughout the evening had been cruelly, uncompromisingly brisk—brisk was the only word for it. She had not cut him off from any farewell speeches, she had been pleased to acknowledge his suitable gratitude with a suitable rejoinder, and she had walked with him to the door of the anteroom, to hope this and that and be sorry for the other, but she had not uttered one word he had cared to hear; and his last vision, as he went his way, was of Challoner—the erewhile luckless despised Challoner—standing on the hearthrug, as it seemed in full possession of the hearthrug, with Lord Overton by his side, and with Lord Overton's hand lying on his shoulder. Do what he could, he could not shake off that remembrance.

A week went by, and Challoner was still at Overton; a fortnight, and Challoner was still at Overton.

"And no word of his going," said Robert Hanwell to his wife. "Of course we cannot have him now: it is out of the question, with all the workmen about, and this visit to my father's pending besides. But they will not hear of his leaving the Hall. 'Pon my word, it looks so peculiar, considering the circumstances, that I—I——" He hardly knew how to take it, in short. He half liked it,

and half not. It was such an odd thing to do, as he had said before,—so odd and unconventional and unlike other people, and like, oh so like Lotta's people,—that it could not be quite right, and yet it was not easy to see wherein it was wrong.

Every time he met Teddy, to his "Challoner still with you?" Teddy would be quite surprised.

With them? Of course he was with them. What should he go away for?

Lady Matilda, more communicative, would comment on her brothers' predilection for the stranger, and on their absolute refusal to let his stay come to an end.

"He will be like the good divine—I forget who it was—who went to his friends for a night and remained with them for thirty years," she cried. "Thirty years hence will see Mr Challoner still at Overton, still longing to go, and still unable to give any reason for going. That is what goes on now. Teddy will not be satisfied without the reason, and Mr Challoner can find none. Now that he has left the army he has nothing to do, so then Teddy will have it out, 'Why?' and as there is no 'why' forthcoming, stay he must. Overton says it is the sharpest thing our Teddy ever did."

"And do you like it?" queried Lotta. She would not have liked it herself; but then, as she reflected, mamma never had taken any part in the housekeeping, so possibly she did not mind that shilly-shallying hanging on from day to day which would have been a great trouble to most housekeepers. To be sure, housekeeping at Overton was not the same as at Endhill. All the same, mamma was not fond of visitors staying in the house for any length of time, Uncle Edward

being so peculiar, and Uncle Overton such a recluse.

Lady Matilda, however, protested that she did not in this instance object. Mr Challoner was a good guest, and her brothers liked him,—and then she talked rather quickly of other things.

By degrees she said less and less of Mr Challoner. She was not much at the cottage at this time. She had a cold, a headache, engagements, one thing and the other to prevent her; and in particular, she had taken to walking instead of riding.

"I met Lady Matilda walking with Mr Challoner along the downs to-day," announced Robert once.

Lady Matilda had turned out of her way to stop him, and had called to him gaily, and greeted him affectionately; inquiries had been made after her daughter, and kisses sent to her grandson; and she had further been careful to explain how her poor horse had hurt his foot, and so her poor Teddy had had to ride alone, and she and Mr Challoner had been forced to come out for a walk.

Her poor Teddy had had to ride alone for some days, and Mr Challoner and Matilda had been out walking on each of these; but this did not transpire on the occasion of meeting Robert. "It was so dull and disconsolate in the house," she had added demurely.

She had not looked particularly dull and disconsolate: the seawind, or something else, had brought a rich warm colour to her cheek, and her eyes had looked full and soft, and her warm plaid shawl had been snugly wrapped round her shoulders, and her dark hat had become her, and altogether she had had a bright and rosy and pleasant appearance; and had she not taken pains to be pleasant to

him, Robert might have disapproved all this, and felt that it was even more to be deprecated and regretted than usual. But Matilda had smiled on him that smile that no mortal man could resist—and he so seldom had it, poor fellow!—and she had slipped her hand so confidently within his arm, and stepped along so willingly by his side, and had made him altogether so entirely one of the party, that he had quite apologised when he had had to leave them, and had felt almost rude in letting them turn to walk back to Overton alone.

But then it had been getting on to five o'clock, and Lady Matilda having Mr Challoner to take care of her, with such an escort could not really have needed any other. He had not been required—but he had been hushed and stroked down—and the result was that to Lotta's "Mamma and Mr Challoner!" he replied with an explanation that was almost more than an apology; it amounted to an eulogium.

"I must own I was surprised," he said; "it was really too kind of Lady Matilda. To be taken out by Lady Matilda herself is a compliment Challoner must certainly feel; and after the coolness with which, I am bound to confess, she treated him at the first, he will appreciate it the more. Challoner is not a man upon whom any attention is thrown away; and to do your mother justice, Lotta,—excuse my speaking frankly, my dear; but really your mother is so very peculiar and unreliable—one never knows what she will do, in short,—I own I had hardly expected such an open display of her change of mind."

"Oh, mamma flies round like a weather-cock," replied Lotta, somewhat tartly. "You need never be surprised at anything mamma does; and she will say one thing one

minute and another the next. For instance yesterday,—what do you think she said about cook yesterday? I told her that we had begun to suspect now that cook had had a hand in Sarah's leaving, and she stopped me at once, before I had even begun to explain what made us think so, with 'Well, my dear, dismiss her'—you know that quick way mamma has,—'Well, my dear, dismiss her,' she said, as if it were nothing to dismiss a woman like cook. I would not on any account dismiss her unless I had good grounds, really good grounds, for doing so; so when I tried to explain this to mamma,—I was trying to show that we had no direct *proofs*, and could not be absolutely *certain* at present, when she cried out, 'Well, my dear, don't dismiss her,'—all in a minute, after she had said 'Dismiss her' two seconds before! And she would not let me utter another word," continued Lotta, whom no one else than Lady Matilda ever contrived to stop. "She actually put her fingers in her ears and laughed at me; then she began playing cup and ball by herself till Mr Challoner came in."

"Oh, Challoner was here at the same time she was yesterday?"

"Why, of course he was, Robert—I told you so; but he would not sit down. He came in on his way from the woods; he had been shooting, and called here on his way back. It was scarcely on his way either, but he had evidently wished to call—and you know he did owe us a call;—but then, when he found mamma here, he was obliged to cut his stay short, as it was getting late, and mamma could not walk home at his pace, he said; otherwise he would have waited to see you; for I told him that you had only gone out to the workmen, and would be in again

directly. However, he would not let me send, as he was afraid it would be dark before they got home, if he did. It was a pity that mamma was here."

"Certainly—yes. Still, I am glad Lady Matilda had the opportunity of seeing for herself the sort of person Challoner is; probably she had never before had him alone," (how little Robert knew!) "and no doubt it was their meeting here yesterday that induced her to show him the cliffs to-day. He had never seen the high cliff before, and your mother had undertaken to show it him. It was extremely polite of Lady Matilda; and she took great pains to signal to me to join them, I assure you. She was waving and calling to me for some time before I discovered who it was. I saw two figures, but never dreamed of its being your mother and Challoner; and they might have passed me quite well had they wished to do so, but they were determined to make me go along with them. They would not let me off. Really I had not been going their way, but I could not refuse when your mother set upon me; and though it may have partly been that she was tired of Challoner, still I don't know; they seemed on excellent terms, and there was nothing rude to him in what Lady Matilda said; she walked between us and took my arm. Well, of course it was natural that she should have more to say to me than to one who is not a member of the family; and I must say this—I always have said it—that no one can make herself more agreeable than Lady Matilda when she chooses—she really could not have been pleasanter than she was this afternoon."

"Oh, mamma can be pleasant enough"—but before the young lady could get her tongue in, he

was proceeding in his own ponderous periods,—“We had a most sociable walk; and though Challoner did not take much part in the conversation—he is a silent fellow at the best of times—he and Lady Matilda seemed quite to understand each other: he carried her shawl, for she had brought a shawl to spread on the rocks where she sits down.”

“Sits down! What a foolish thing to do!”

“Certainly, quite so; very foolish, no doubt. I would not sit out on a day like this myself; but your mother is very strong, and not apt to take cold, I fancy. I recommended them to the best place. They would be quite sheltered in the spot I selected; and after walking from the Hall to the high cliff, Lady Matilda would really require a rest. She owed to being a little tired, which she seldom does. That was why they stopped at the cliff, and did not come on here; and besides, the roads are in such a shameful state, as Lady Matilda said—quite unfit for ladies.”

“Mamma never minds that.”

“Quite so; I thought she never did. I was glad to hear her allow as much, for Lady Matilda is far too venturesome as a rule.”

“She should never have been out to-day.”

“Oh, indeed it was a far better day than you have the least idea of, my love. Sitting indoors listening to the wind gave you no notion of what a fine soft air it really was. A turn in the garden, with a wrap round your head, would have done you all the good in the world. I assure you I quite regretted that I had not suggested it to you. It really seemed quite selfish to have all the enjoyment myself, for it certainly was extremely enjoyable: as Lady Matilda said, the sea in itself was a sight worth braving

the chance of a ducking for. Well, I did not altogether agree to that ; but no doubt when we got up to the furze common, and saw round the east point where the rocks jut out, it was very fine, uncommonly fine. As Lady Matilda said, we have had nothing as fine this year ; Lady Matilda has undoubtedly an eye for the picturesque in nature, and Challoner——”

——“Well, I must say,” burst forth Lotta, finding at length something on which an indefinite gathering annoyance could wreak itself —“I must say that I do wonder at you, Robert : you seem to be quite pleased that mamma and Mr Challoner should be wandering about the country all alone by themselves. You who are so very particular about these things, how would you have liked *me* to be seen miles from home, all by myself, with a young man ? What would you have said if I had set off with Mr Whewell, or—or any one else, to visit the high cliff, and walk along those lonely downs, where you may walk for hours and never come across a living soul ? I would not have done such a thing for the world. If I had ever *wished* to do it—and I never should have wished, I am sure—you would have been the very *last* person to have encouraged me ; you would have been quite shocked. You——”

——“My dear !” gasped he.

“And yet, just because you were taking part in it yourself——”

——“My dear Lotta” — but Robert was for perhaps the first time in his life fairly at a loss. It was quite true that it *was* because he had been taking part in it himself—that because he had been freshened by a pleasant walk in pleasant company, and had been unwittingly cajoled into benevolence, he was thus lenient and amiable ;

and could he deny it ? “I—I—really,” he exclaimed. “Really,” beginning to recover himself, “you take a very incorrect, and, I must add, prejudiced view of the case.”

“Prejudiced ! Well, I don’t see how that can be,” rejoined the young lady, pursuing her advantage. “Considering that it is only your own account I have to go by, if I am prejudiced, it is likely to be on your side,” which had a distinct element of truth in it, and scored indubitably a point for Charlotte. “Your own version of what took place is the only one I have heard ; so if I do not look upon it in the same light as you do, I cannot see how it is that I can be prejudiced on the other side. All I say is, how would you like people to see me going about like that ? Should you approve if I were to do as mamma does ?”

“Certainly not,” replied Robert, promptly ; “but, my dear, you mistake the case. Your mother is—is placed in a peculiar position, living as she does with your uncles, and they being—at least your uncle Overton being so solitary in his habits——”

——“There is always Uncle Edward.”

“Your uncle Edward was otherwise engaged to-day. Lady Matilda took particular pains to explain this to me. I fancy she thought I might feel a passing surprise at meeting her and Mr Challoner out by themselves, but I did not at all—not in the slightest. I saw at once how it was ; Challoner could hardly have been sent out alone——”

“Why not ?”

“Impossible, my love ; it would have been most impolite—disrespectful, I should say.”

“Then he could have ridden with Uncle Edward.”

“You may take my word for it

that there was a sufficient reason for his not doing so. I forget what it was, but of this I am confident, that Lady Matilda explained it entirely to my satisfaction; and as for there being anything improper in Lady Matilda's escorting Challoner herself, if *that* is what you insinuate, my dear," — (Richard was now himself, every inch himself again, and could have felled to the earth a dozen Lottas with his flats, had they lifted up their voices against his) — "really, ahem! I am amazed that so extremely absurd and unsuitable an idea should have entered your head. I confess I should never have anticipated such an objection. As if any lady of your mother's age and standing could not be trusted to walk alone with a gentleman without remarks being made! Remember this, my love, that it is

not in the thing itself; it is in its being a cause for remark that the real objection lies. I could trust you with any one, Lotta, of course; but it would be highly indiscreet in either of us to run the risk of people gossiping; but," raising his voice, "but—I know perfectly what you would say, my dear—one moment—allow me," with his hand in the air, "you and your mother are two very different people: you are eighteen, and Lady Matilda is thirty-seven. Thirty-seven: ahem! If that is not answer enough for you, it is for me. I have my own ideas; and I must say—you must permit me to say it, my love—that I never before had my ideas on the matter of impropriety called in question."

So saying, he closed the debate, and stalked from the room master of the field.

CHAPTER XVII.—MOONLIT WAVES.

"The twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea."

—LONGFELLOW.

"Who is coming to see the waves to-night?" inquired Teddy that evening at dinner. "They were breaking over the lifeboat-house forty feet high last night, Spiers tells me, and half the town was out watching them. I wish we had been there; we ought to have been there; I felt such a fool not even to have known anything about it. How did we not know, Matilda? Somebody should have told us."

"We did not see anybody to tell us, and we did not think of it for ourselves," replied she; "besides——" and she glanced at her elder brother.

"Well, I'm going to-night anyhow," said Teddy, in his "I've made up my mind" tone; "I don't

care who stays behind. Spiers says the tide will be full between ten and eleven, and they say it is going to be splendid. Spiers says the shopkeepers and people have been barricading their windows all day, for a lot of windows got smashed last night, and even right up the back streets the water poured into the cellars. Spiers says everybody was there; it seemed so stupid for us not to be there."

"How is the sea so high?" inquired Challoner. "Though there has been some wind, it has hardly amounted to anything of a gale."

"It's the time of year for it," said Teddy, lucidly. "I don't know why, but always about this

time of year the sea goes mad; and we ought to have known it," looking reproachfully at Matilda. "Why didn't the Applebys or some one tell us? They were there, I'll be bound."

"It is quite a sight then," said Challoner, and then he too looked at Lady Matilda, and she knew perfectly what his look as well as her brother's meant.

"If Overton likes," she murmured hesitatingly.

Now why should Matilda have hesitated; why did she not, as she would once have done, respond eagerly and joyously to the implied desire? A week ago and she would have been herself the one to propose just such an expedition; and yet now—now when the idea sends a thrill through her veins and a throb through her heart—she sits with downcast eyes and scarcely finds words for a response. Can it be that something has already passed between her and Challoner on the subject? Is he, perchance, not so absolutely ignorant on the subject as one would suppose? Teddy, at least, sees nothing of this, and is impatient and alarmed; he has already been done out of the sport—been absent when every one else was present the previous evening—and he is ready to protest and explode, indeed to defy authority altogether, if a voice is raised in opposition now. There is not in reality the slightest chance of any such voice being raised; even Overton himself is rather disposed for the thing than not—it is a kind of adventure he can enjoy. Nobody puts him forward, or makes him of consequence, or worries him, or pesters him on this sort of occasion; and accordingly—

"I'll go if you like," he said quite good-humouredly; "the night is fine enough——"

——"Fine enough! I should

just say so, rather;" cried his brother, his excitement rising to a height. "Now, Matilda, you give in; just you say no more, but get your things on and come along too; when even Overton is going——"

——"Oh, of course," assented his sister very gently; "of course if you are—are all inclined for it, I—I should like it very much. It will be a beautiful sight, and there will be plenty of others to keep us in countenance; and with such a moon we shan't come to grief among the hedges on our way to the town, and——"

"That's right; that's a good girl; I knew she would knock under in the long-run," nodded Teddy, patronisingly. "Now do be quick over dinner, and let us get off by nine. I'll order the phaeton at nine. Now, Matilda, you won't keep us waiting; and, Challoner, mind it will be cold by the sea, and we may get a drenching as likely as not,—do take my topcoat; now *do*," very earnestly. "I have dozens of coats, and——"

"Not one that Challoner could get into," observed his brother, with his slow occasional smile. "You must have it let out half a yard or so first, Ted: Challoner has an uncommonly nice topcoat of his own too. If you get us all off by nine and don't forget your topcoat for yourself, my boy," continued he, "that will be two feats in one night. Have you ordered the phaeton yet?"

He had already forgotten to ring the bell, and the bustle attendant on this, and on giving the order, kept him happily engaged throughout the remainder of the meal.

Fain would he have had them all go in the T-cart; but as that was impossible, he could at least himself drive the phaeton, with Matilda beside him, and Overton

and Challoner behind,—and so he announced that the four were to be arranged. It was his expedition, and he was allowed to do with them as he chose; and though he fancied that Challoner was stupid about something, and did not understand how cleverly they would all fit in when thus disposed of, he fancied that it was an inclination on Challoner's part to handle the reins himself which made him so unresponsive; and much as he liked Challoner, this was too much: he must always drive, whatever nasty things Matilda might insinuate about the hedges. As, however, nothing was said, all went well, and luckily his peace of mind was undisturbed by overhearing an aside in the hall, when his sister was having her furs fastened.

"Are you at all nervous?" said Challoner, softly.

"Not to-night; I have told William what horse to give us, and we shall only have one. I think there is no fear."

"You would not like Lord Overton to drive, or—or me?"

"He would not like it." There was a very slight emphasis on the "he," but it was caught and understood. "It would put him out sadly: don't, please, don't say anything."

Nor did he further, but he sat well forward in the back seat, gazing on ahead with anxious careful protecting eyes, on along the narrow zigzag lanes, whose treacherous windings might produce anything at any moment; and somehow Matilda, as she sat just before him, was dimly conscious that there was an arm behind which would have been thrown around her at the first approach of danger.

The air was mild, and the vehemence of its fitful blasts had completely died away ere the party

set out. Now there remained only a pleasant freshness, a clear bespangled sky overhead, and such soft wet roads as were delightful to traverse, when the mud only splashed the wheels of the phaeton and the glossy coat of the quiet old gig-horse. The very road-pools and ditches by the wayside were bright with moonlight, and reflected the chaise as it passed. All were comfortably tucked in, and the cigars of the gentlemen behind yielded only the faintest of fragrance to those before—"Just what she likes," Overton answered for his sister, as he passed the match on to his companion.

Now and then it was of course absolutely necessary to ask if she did like it, to find out if she were warm and snug, to ascertain that she was not missing such and such a point in the landscape, and to this end Challoner must occasionally lean forward, and oblige her to turn her head and listen to his deep voice sunk to an undertone; but for the most part of the way the phaeton rolled on amidst a cheerful contented silence—just such a silence as Lord Overton liked—and in little more than half an hour from the time of starting they entered the outskirts of Seaburgh.

Having for the latter portion of the way been obliged to make a considerable curve, and strike inland for a mile or so before approaching the coast again, it was not until phaeton and horse had been disposed of, and our party had hurried through some very shabby and dim back streets—not over-savoury back streets—streets that were redolent of tar, nets, stale fish, and all the concomitants of a small seaport,—it was not until these had been perforce threaded, that they began to experience some reward, or at least some apparent

reward—some reward that could be taken hold of, for the exertions of the evening.

"Just you wait—just you wait," had been a frequent exhortation in the mouth of the self-constituted leader, as Teddy, with all the importance of a general, conducted his forces round corner after corner; and truly it seemed worth the waiting for, when the great, rolling, booming breakers, which had been heard and felt and known to be near, and yet remained tantalisingly unseen for so long, at length fell at their feet.

As the authority Spiers had promised, all the world of Seaburgh was abroad to see the sight, some hurrying in one direction, some in another; and the sea-walk being for the nonce impassable, the usually unpopular and shabby short cuts and back entrances were now in the ascendant. Everybody was glad of a shelter from the flying spray, which seemed to search out the deepest hollows so long as they faced the sea, and nobody could afford to despise the poorest and narrowest back alleys which enabled them to reach their destination.

It was from a long dark by-way that our party at length emerged, to plunge no more into such, but to join the groups already assembled wherever an angle of the break-water afforded a dry footing, or even one partially so, whence they could enjoy the weird and beauteous spectacle. Even these prudent folks were not, however, destined altogether to escape the effects of their discreet temerity: every now and then there would be a cry and a run from venturesome boys making the most of the frolic; while the more sober-minded, who had no desire for an encounter, and would not have willingly run any risk, would provoke risibility in their

neighbours by the early reluctance and the final haste of their ignominious retreat,—they would scarce hasten a step to begin with, and would scud like the wind in the end. The careful, sedate, reasoning man, in particular, would be a source of exultation to the thoughtless: he would calculate to a nicety the time likely to be taken in making his way across a dangerous spot, and would so calculate as to take his time jauntily; he would wait until the moment after a heavy sea had swamped the pebbly road and retreated, at which happy moment was to be exhibited to the lookers-on the excellence of his forethought, by advancing before another of any size could approach; and he would have but gone a step or two when, lo! he was bespattered from head to foot, the victim of a pitiless shower, and all his wisdom would be seen to have been thrown away. There was no calculating upon the monsters; none could say how or when they would come.

All of this was, of course, fun to be rapturously appreciated by foolish Teddy Lessingham, who laughed till his sides were sore, and could not comprehend how it was that Matilda did not as usual respond to and share his ecstasies. Matilda hardly seemed to see what was going on; she was very quiet—curiously quiet; he could not get her to budge from a place she had chosen, whence nothing could be seen but the ocean itself—a little obscure nook, where she and Chaloner stood together, and which even Overton objected to; and though with infinite pains he secured to her, and signed and beckoned her to come forward and take possession of, a more favoured standing-place close to the railing, and almost overhanging the water, she demurred so long that the opportunity was

lost. The crowds jostled together and filled up the gap; he had to retire and give up what it had cost him so much cunning and cleverness to obtain, while even then the ungrateful creature had hardly the grace to say "Thank you."

No wonder he was indignant; had it not been for the best joke in the world coming off at that moment, in the shape of the whole front row of spectators getting soused at once by a silylly advancing wave, which, looking as innocent as a babe, took them all by surprise, before they knew where they were—had it not been for this, causing him to stamp his feet and shout with the glee of the vilest little urchin present, he would have given Matilda a piece of his mind. But by the time he got back to her, he had forgotten everything but mirth, and as she took his arm kindly and listened amiably, all was right between them. He could not, however, long be content to remain in the stupid place she had selected, and at length prevailed so far as to make her allow that there was yet more to be seen, and that perhaps it would be as well to see it. The "more" referred in especial to a bit of breakwater a few streets to the right, where the principal attraction appeared to be, to judge by the people who flocked towards the point; and as Teddy must always go where others went, and see what they saw, he was soon restless to follow to the lifeboat-house. It was against the lifeboat-house that the fullest force of the waters fell.

Hard to move as Matilda had proved, she had to own on arriving at this spot that her troublesome brother had been right: nothing they had yet seen could equal what they now beheld.

It was indeed a spectacle never to be forgotten.

White in the brilliant moonlight, the raging sea could be seen to its horizon; high into the cloudless heavens flew the fountains of foam. With a sweep and power resistless, yet with a grace ineffable and ease indescribable, with a rhythm mysterious yet precision accurate, wave after wave came on, the first exquisite burst succeeded by a back-swing and curve, and then a falling away to gather up once more, and break, and break, and break again—hither, thither, this way, that way—across, athwart, afar, at hand—twining, circling, winding, wreathing—in and out, up and down, until drunk into one another at last—no beginning, no end—none alone, each a part of the other.

As the tide rose, even the highest point of the lifeboat-tower was from time to time obscured, and the little knot of watchers who had pressed forward to the front had more than once to change their ground, as the circling froth covered the space whereon they had at first stood.

Lord Overton and his party sought the shadow of a projecting gable, and still watched in silence; even admiration and exclamations died away—none cared to speak. At length, "I never saw anything like this before," said Challoner's voice behind Matilda—close, close behind her.

She did not bid him "hush," as she might have done Whewell; she did not answer, nor turn, nor move away; she stood still, feeling that he was there, and that he had been there all the time,—that he had never yielded his place, and never meant to yield it, and that as they looked, so they felt—together.

Going home, he asked her to sit behind with him.

AJAX AND PHILOCTETES.

THE "Ajax" of Sophocles appears to be his first extant play, while there are good grounds for considering his "Philoctetes" to be certainly one of his latest tragedies, and, possibly, his very last. It is on this, as on many other accounts, interesting to compare and to contrast them. Each contains a divine apparition, which is not the case with the other plays of Sophocles possessed by us. Each derives its subject from an incident in the Trojan war subsequent to the time covered by the "Iliad," and described by one of Homer's later followers. Each places before us a hero burning with hatred against Ulysses, by whom he conceives himself to have been wronged in a way that only blood can expiate. Each makes us the witnesses of the agonies of a great and lonely soul driven in upon itself by the desertion of friends, and by finding all outward things turned against it. In each the wisdom of Ulysses plays a conspicuous part: but while it is in the "Ajax" triumphant to the end, it is in the "Philoctetes" rebuked by the generous candour of a youthful spirit; so that we see that worldly prudence and cleverness had fallen, not risen, with advancing years in the aged poet's estimate, and that in the calm light of his life's evening he discerned more clearly than in its hotter and hazier morning the pre-eminence of truth. Again, it is characteristic of an old man's shrinking from the wilder excitements in which youth delights, and from

painful subjects, that the end of the "Philoctetes" is its hero's reconciliation with life and with his own former foes; whereas, in the tragedy of Sophocles' early manhood, Ajax, too impetuous to await the relaxing of an offended deity's wrath, at once takes

"arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing ends it,"

and his own life at the same time.

The Sophoclean irony, about which so much has been said, is in each play conspicuous. Words are spoken in each, both designedly and unintentionally, that carry one meaning to the mind of their immediate hearers, and another to that of the audience. And the irony is not confined to words, but arises in a stranger and more subtle form from the situations in which the principal characters are placed, leading them to act contrary to their true nature. The young and truthful Neoptolemus is for a while an artful deceiver; the magnanimous Ajax is covered by his own deed with ignominy; the crafty Ulysses stands forth to enact a highly generous part. More than this, not only are men placed by stress of circumstances at variance with their true selves, but they are themselves—which conveys the nobler lesson learned by the poet in his ripened age—raised to a strange superiority over those adverse circumstances; as when the weak and crippled outcast Philoctetes proves the predestined conqueror of Troy, and, like Œdipus at Colonus, rises mightier amid his misfortunes than in his prosperous days.

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1. The Ajax of Sophocles. Edited by Professor Jebb.
 2. Sophocles (Clarendon Press Series). Edited by Professor Campbell.
 3. Sophocles (Classical Writers). By Professor Campbell.
 4. Sophocles. The Seven Plays in English Verse. By Professor Campbell.

The action of both plays is extremely simple—much that in a modern drama would have been represented on the stage being narrated in their course. “*Philoctetes*” is tragic in tone, but, like the “*Alcestis*” and some other plays of Euripides, it has, as has been observed already, a happy ending, and so far fails to fulfil the notion of a perfect tragedy; while “*Ajax*” does not finish, as we should have supposed that it would, with its hero’s death, but closes with a reconciliation,—although of another kind to that which cheerfully ends the “*Philoctetes*.”

Thus antique art works to the same object as modern, but often with other means; is self-controlled amid the most passionate excitement, and aims at leaving on its spectator’s mind a calming and satisfying impression.

The main thesis of the “*Ajax*” has been defined to be the superiority of wisdom and prudence over mere physical strength—the former impersonated by Ulysses, the latter by Ajax. Ajax, in his rash self-reliance, provokes the gods by declaring himself strong enough to triumph without their aid; and Athene, in her wrath, deprives him of his reason, and lets him do deeds in one fatal day which no following one can wipe out. Ulysses, in the height of success, dreads being carried away from the paths of wise moderation, and so does nothing to provoke a sudden reverse of fortune. And thus the “*Ajax*” of Sophocles has been held to sum up the lessons taught by the “*Iliad*” and the “*Odyssey*,” emphasising, as the first does not, the defeat of arrogance, and exhibiting, like the last, the victory of good sense.

But deeper thoughts really pervade the whole: the sorrowful one of how the noblest characters are often misunderstood till death

clears away the folds which concealed them, and of how circumstances may be too strong for the strongest, and death the only refuge for the bravest, joined to the consoling one that true nobleness of mind must assert itself sooner or later, in spite of malice and of its possessor’s own mistakes—if not in life, at least in death.

The play begins with the impressive apparition of Athene. It is no mortal power that is destroying the mighty Ajax, but the direct interposition of an offended deity. When Ajax left Salamis to join the expedition against Troy, his old father, Telamon, bade him seek victory always by the aid of the gods. The young chieftain gave the presumptuous answer, “Father, the gods can make even the worthless triumph; I can bring glory upon my head without them.” Therefore upon that head Athene has now brought shame. Moreover, Ajax had provoked her by a personal insult—declining her offered aid as needless in the hour of battle.

Yet it is not only her displeasure at Ajax that has brought the goddess from Olympus, but her care for her beloved Greeks. For their chiefs have provoked Ajax by awarding the armour of the slain Achilles to Ulysses instead of to him; and though Troy is tottering to its fall, its predestined destruction may be averted should the disappointed chieftain wreak his furious anger on their remaining leaders. Therefore, alike for their preservation and for his punishment, Athene has inflicted a temporary madness on Ajax, which has made him turn his anger on the helpless flocks and herds of the army instead of on its generals; and she calls forth her favourite Ulysses to see the results of her maternal care. “She comes at the height of what mortals deem her wrath; but what calmness, what

sublime self-possession, breathes in every word ! We see that she has done nothing but in care for the army. In maddening Ajax she has saved the generals, from whom she has brushed away the impending danger, 'as a mother flicks a fly from her sleeping child,' and in the defeat he suffered the inevitable consequence of his overweening pride. Her face is still against him—that the spectator sees—and her divine irony is terrible."¹ But her wrath will not endure for ever ; and even now she has a word of compassion for his downfall, and of warning to her favourite not to exult at it unduly.

"Stand firm, and behold the sight," says Athene to Ulysses, "that you may report it to the Argives" ; and in spite of his unwillingness she makes him stand beside her while she summons Ajax from his tent to give in his report to her of his imaginary exploits. He comes forth, scourge in hand, having slain, as he believes, two of his worst foes — Agamemnon and

Menelaus,—they will never again insult him, or rob him of a prize that he deserves,—and he is about to inflict a more cruel and prolonged chastisement on Ulysses, whom he believes he has bound within his tent. In all this he acknowledges Athene's aid ; and the stern goddess has the satisfaction of hearing the thanks, denied her for real assistance, now offered to her for what will prove the recipient's ruin. But not even at her intercession will he spare his hated rival. In all things else, but not in this, will he obey his powerful protectress. He goes back joyfully,—to finish his cruel work, as he supposes ; but in reality to awake from his delusion with an anguish proportioned to the pleasure that it has given him. His parting words to the goddess who has befooled him are an example of Sophoclean irony, since the help, for the continuance of which he prays, is precisely what, had he known the truth, he would least have desired :—

Ajax. Now to my work ; only stand ever by me,
Goddess, with help such as thy help this day.

[Exit.

Athene. Seest thou, Ulysses, what in might we gods are ?
Who was, till now, more prudent than this man ?
Whose hand more strong to strike, and at right time ?

Ulysses. I know not what to say : I pity him
Afflicted thus, although mine enemy,
Now that an evil doom has bound him fast,
My own case seeing while I look on his,
Discerning how we mortals merely live
A life phantasmal, and are fleeting shades.

Ath. This having seen take warning : never speak
An insolent word against the gods ;² nor yet
Exalt thyself in pride when flourishing
In might, or in abundance of great wealth.
For in one day all human things can be
Brought low or lifted up ; and the gods love
The wise and good,—and ever hate the bad."

And so, having thus early pointed the moral of the play,—the danger of haughty self-reliance, the blessing of wise moderation,—the god-

dess vanishes from sight ; leaving the audience to infer, from her august apparition, how great must be the hero against whom such an

¹ Campbell.

² Like the two unlucky speeches of Ajax.

adversary has thought it worth while to take the field, and what noble qualities they have a right to expect from the man whom she honours with her guardian care.

Ulysses having departed to tell what he has seen to the army, the vacant stage is filled by the Chorus. They are the followers of Ajax, sailors from his native island,—the sea-girt Salamis, dear by association of victorious memories to the Athenian audience of Sophocles. In that distant isle the hero's aged parents are awaiting their conquering son's return. There, too, are the humbler homes of his spearmen, who now, as they march slowly forward, declare their leader's welfare to be their joy, and their hearts to be fluttering "like a winged dove with troubled eye" at the rumours of his onslaught on the precious herds and flocks of the Greeks. They wish to put them aside as an idle slander devised by Ulysses; but, to their dismay, they find that they are being widely spread and generally believed. "Without thee, O king, we have no strength to deny them," say they: "appear, and, like chattering birds scared by a mighty vulture, thy foes will cower voiceless and still before thee. Or can"—as the dreadful thought arises that the report may after all be true—"some god have maddened thee, displeased for lack of thank-offering that was his due? Rise from thy long tarrying in thy tent, and strengthen no longer by thine absence the insolence of those who hate thee." But no Ajax issues forth, brave and fearless as of old, to respond to this appeal. The tent-door, indeed, opens; but instead of the champion for whose presence and support they are longing, the Chorus only see the trembling form of his captive slave-wife, Tecmessa, advancing towards them. She comes to confide her anxiety

about her husband to his friends. It is not for her to speak with the confidence of a spouse who, herself his equal in birth, has been wedded with fit solemnities to a princely consort. Yet she dearly loves the lord on whom the chance of war bestowed her, and who has since dealt with her kindly; and it is with grief no less than fear that she tells how the strong and famous Ajax, smitten by madness, has been deluging his tent with the blood of slaughtered cattle,—with deepening anguish that she hears whose herds he has been destroying, and what anger he has provoked by the deed. The Chorus—their worst suspicions confirmed—look forward to the hour when the indignant army, deprived by Ajax of some of their supplies, and furious at his treachery to the common cause, will rush on to stone him and his followers, and ask whether they should not veil their heads and steal away ashamed, grasping once more the oars which they plied with such different hopes when they left Salamis. But when they hear from Tecmessa the story of her lord's sad awakening from his wild dream of gratified vengeance, they stay to give him what comfort they can.

From it the audience learn what went on within the tent after Ajax had quitted Athene and Ulysses. Having slain some of his victims, and prepared to torture another, Ajax darted forth from it, she says, at the call, to her own ears inaudible, of some phantom, with whom he seemed to hold discourse for a while outside. But, as he returned, to complete his bloody work, his frenzy suddenly left him, like a vehement south wind falling and giving place to a calm; and, in that lull before a second and worse storm, he is unhappier than before; since a while ago, causing his friends misery, he madly re-

joiced himself, but now he shares the wretchedness which he cannot lighten. For as his reason awakened, and he saw around him, not, as he expected, the corpses of mighty chiefs, but merely slain sheep and cattle, he gave a wild cry, smote his head, and sank down on the bloody floor of his tent. Next, having wrung the whole truth by terrible threats from his reluctant wife, he burst out into the loud and shrill wailings which, never heard from his own lips before, he had always despised others for uttering. So he has remained ever since, refusing meat and drink, seated amid the relics of his past fury, sullenly brooding over the harm he has done and the shame that has befallen him. Tecmessa's last hope is that he may prove less deaf to the voice of his comrades in arms than to her own.

Scarcely has she told her tale

when a low, deep sound, as of a wild bull roaring in the hunter's toils, comes forth from the tent,—at first inarticulate, and then the voice of Ajax is distinguished, calling for his little son, and for his absent brother, Teucer. Tecmessa throws back the curtains which form the tent-door, and the spectators see the mighty man in his misery. Ajax lifts up his eyes from among the slaughtered cattle that surround him, and sees the companions, who had so often shouted their plaudits at his victories, now standing the silent spectators of his deep disgrace. He, once their self-reliant mainstay, now cries to them for help,—the only help of which his calamity admits—and bids them come and slay him. They forbid him to think of any remedy so desperate; but they have no effectual one to offer in its place.

Ajax. Sailors kind ! alone my friends, who only
Still by friendship's upright law abide,
Ye behold what wave by deadly storm set flowing
Girds me round with blood on every side.

CHORUS (*to Tecmessa*).

Thou seemst a too true witness to have borne—
This sight shows plain how madly he has dealt.

Ajax. Faithful mates, upon the waste of water
Plying steadily the skilful oar,
Unto you I look alone for help in trouble,—
Come and slay me : let me grieve no more.

CHORUS.

So speak not ; piling evil upon evil,
Let not the cure make ever worse the ill.

Ajax. See ye how I, the bold, the fearless,
Who met unflinching any foe in fight,
Have turned my hand 'gainst peaceful sheep ? and cheerless,
Disgraced, derided, shrink from all men's sight ?

Tecmessa. Ajax, my lord, I pray thee, speak not so.

Ajax. Thou here ? Begone ! Turn thy feet swiftly hence.
Alas ! alas !

Tec. For heaven's sake yield ! be wise !

Ajax. Wretch that I am ! who, letting go the throats
Of my true foes, turned in their stead
Of harmless oxen and of goodly goats
The blood to shed.

CHORUS.

Why wilt thou thus torment thee? done is done;
Nor is it given us to recall the past.

Ajax. O all-observing, of all sorrow
Contriver sly, Laertes' evil son!
Our host's worst knave! what laughter thou wilt borrow
For long from joy of seeing me undone!

CHORUS.

We laugh, or we lament, as will the gods.

Ajax. Though broken thus, would I might see him here.
Woe's me!

CHORUS.

Boast not: thou seest how ill thy state.

Ajax. Zeus! father of my fathers! grant, I pray
Me, that most cunning, hateful knave,
And those two kings, having prevailed to slay,
To seek the grave.

Tec. If such thy prayer, pray that with thee I die;
For why should I live on if thou art dead?

Ajax. O darkness, now my light!¹
Ye nether-glooms, clear-shining to mine eyes!
Take me, oh take me, to your home.
Take me to whom no good can come
From men, unworthy of th' immortals' sight;
Whom Jove's child wise
And dread in might
Destroys with foul disgrace,
No refuge left,
Of home bereft.

My honours vanish, friends! and I must face
Vengeance who fondly dreamed of victory:
Soon all in arms the host will rush on me,
Death come on me apace.

Tec. Unhappy I! who hear such words unwonted
And strange from one who never flinched till now.

Ajax. O caves beside the shore!
Paths by the wild waves! groves the sea beside!
Long have ye kept me here, too long
By Troy; but 'mid the living throng
No more shall ye detain me, never more.
Waters whose tide
(Scamander's store)
Refreshed us, flowing nigh,
Ye on your plain
Shall not again
Behold me (great the boast!) your Troy defy
With strength unequalled in the warlike band
That came from Greece; yet now on the same strand
I thus dishonoured lie."

Then, in words for which it is Ajax goes on to say that the pro-
hard to find English equivalents, phesy of his name's mournful sound

¹ This sad prayer is the more touching, as the lips which now invoke darkness are the same that prayed for light in a well-known passage in the "Iliad."

in Greek (the *nomen et omen*) is fulfilled by the woes under which he is now groaning; and to marvel at the cruel destiny which has appointed that the very land where his father, Telamon, gained such glory as the comrade of Heracles should be the scene of his son's disgrace; although, as he says, "I attacked that self-same Troy with strength no less than his, and did deeds before it great as ever he did." Could Achilles have adjudged his own arms, would *he* have passed me over for a clever schemer as the Atreidæ have done? he asks in bitterness of soul; or could I have failed in my revenge had not the

daughter of Zeus, the fierce-eyed virgin, interposed, and made me redden my hands instead with the blood of these poor cattle? So much for the past; and then, when such has been the past, what future can be looked forward to? The hero's mind flies to Salamis, and to the brave old warrior who sits beside his hearth there, waiting to hear that his son has outdone even his own exploits, and longing to embrace that son as he stands once more on his threshold, crowned with glory as the second captor of Troy. Ajax sees his look of disappointment beforehand. It is too much for him, and he sadly asks,—

"And now what must I do? I, whom the gods Plainly abhor; whom the Greek army hates;
To whom all Troy and all these plains are hostile?
Shall I cross o'er th' Egean to my home,
Leaving th' Atreidæ lonely in their harbour?
What face should I present unto my father,
Telamon? how could he bear to look on me
Coming disgraced, without the meed of valour,
Whereof he won a great and glorious crown?
Nay, that I could not bear. Then shall I go
Alone to assail the wall of Troy,—and there,
Some brave deed doing, were it best to die?
Nay; for at that th' Atreidæ would rejoice.
This will not do. Some emprise must I seek
Whereby to certify my aged father
That I, his son, was not at heart a coward.¹
The length of days is but disgrace to him
Who for his ills can find no remedy.
For how can death's approach and death's delay,
As dull day follows day, give pleasure to us?
I hold the man below the vilest rate
Who by such empty hopes is still beguiled.
Nobly to live, else nobly yield his life,
Behoves the well-born man."

The Chorus in their hearts approve their chief's resolution, though they think it right to combat it in words; for they secretly share his opinion that the grave is the only secure refuge from shame such as has fallen on him.

But there is one present to whom the matter appears in a

very different light. Tecmessa sees her idolised lord, her only mainstay, about to be rent from her; and, laying aside the timidity that generally kept her silent in his presence, she pleads with him for his own life, in which hers is bound up, as Andromache does with Hector,—only yet more pas-

¹ "Why should the heroism of Ajax be proved by suicide better than by rushing on death in battle? Because, according to the strictest rule of ancient chivalry, a soldier once disgraced had thenceforth no place in life: its opportunities were for him at an end. His sole duty was to die quietly—and at once."—Jebb.

sionately because the impending peril is nearer. Of the fate which reduced her from a wealthy, free-born condition to the miserable estate of a slave, she only makes mention that she may remind Ajax how sad, if he divorces her by death, must be the lot of one who has now no civil rights to claim, and whose servile degradation would be the shame of him who had once suffered her to call him husband. The misfortune would be mine, she says; but the taunts called forth by my altered condition would fall in their disgrace upon you and on your family. Pity for her own future troubles is not, however, what the hapless Tecmessa chiefly relies on to move the heart of Ajax; so she proceeds to invoke names holier and tenderer to a Greek than that which he had condescended to bestow on her, and conjures him to live by the remembrance of his aged parents, and by his love for his little son. Fear—so run her words—to desert your father in his weary old age—your mother, the inheritress of many years, whose fond prayers often ascend to the gods for your return. Above all, great king, pity your child: do not leave him to the harshness of unfriendly guardians. His mother cannot protect him. Think what your death would be to him,—and to me, she adds, constrained as it were by her lord's inflexible silence to try to move him to some sense of her pitiful case. I have none to whom I can look for help but you. You¹ laid waste my country; fate by other means brought my parents down to dwell in Hades. What country, what wealth have I save you? In you all my welfare is bound up. Oh, then, be a little mindful of me

(as well as of those three far dearer to you, is the suppressed clause of the sentence). It becomes a man not to forget those who have done ought to pleasure him. Love should beget love. You say the well-born man should die nobly; but would he not dishonour his birth if, in so doing, he showed himself forgetful of past benefits?

Ajax hears her, but remains, if not unmoved, yet unshaken in his resolution. He does not indeed mean to betray Tecmessa and her son to his enemies. But he feels that he can trust the affection and the strong arm of his half-brother, Teucer, with their future lives. His own must at any price be ended quickly. Better that his old parents weep over a dead than over a dishonoured, son; better part with his child at once than see him grow up to blush at his father's name. So veiling his tenderness for his unhappy wife by stern gruff tones, he says that he would rather have her obedience than her advice, and bids her fetch the child to him,—sent away from the tent, for fear of harm, while his madness was raging. Tecmessa calls him at once, and then comes one of the most pathetic scenes of the Greek drama—the unconscious little one, over whose head so great an evil is impending, smiling in the arms of the father who would gladly stay to guard him, but who sees the imperious form of Honour beckoning him away to the dim waters of Acheron, and who dares not disobey the summons;—the man who, taking his last look at life in the person of the child for whom life is just beginning, sees, as he never saw before, what a rugged path those little feet will

¹ Andromache, the lawful and beloved wife of Hector, has no such sad memories. It was Achilles who sacked her native Thebe, and slew her father and her brethren. It is Tecmessa's peculiar infelicity that the stroke which will avenge her country is to complete her own ruin.

have to travel, and sorrowfully owns and that our earliest years are that grief comes with knowledge, our best.

“*Ajax.* Put him into mine arms ; for at the sight
Of this fresh blood he will not feel afraid,
If verily and indeed he is my son.

O child ! be happier than has been thy father,
Like him in all things else,¹—then none can scorn thee.
Although even now for this I count thee blest,
That of these ills I feel not one can sting thee ;
For life is sweetest while thou nought canst know,
Nor yet hast learned both to rejoice and grieve.
But when to that thou comest, then I charge thee,
Show to thy father's foes whose son thou art.
Feed on light airs till then, thy tender life
Soft nourishing, make glad thy mother's heart.
Nor, well I know, will one of all the Greeks
Insult thee with harsh taunts, even 'reft of me,
Who leave thee to a trusty guardian's care,
To Teucer's watchfulness ; albeit now
Far from us, busied in his chase of foes.
My sailors, warrior-comrades, you I charge
In common with this task of love, and bid
Report to him this my command ; to bring
My child unto my home, and show him there
To Telamon, and my mother—Eriboea²—
That he may duteously attend their age.
These arms of mine let no man set as prize
Of contest to the Greeks,³—not my destroyer.
Nay ! but my son take this whence comes thy name
Eurysakes,⁴ grasped by its twisted handle,
My sevenfold shield that never foeman pierced ;
Bury my other arms along with me.”

Then the great lonely man turns with something of contempt to the tender timid wife, who has failed to comprehend his true nature, gives back to her the child, and bids her make haste to close the tent, where he wishes to be left alone, upon him, and to refrain from lamentations outside it. Women, he says, love to wail ; but his case is too serious for words. No wise surgeon, who knows the knife is needed, will waste his patient's time and his own by moaning out charms over a sore. Even so for his wounded

honour there is one remedy only, and that a short and sharp one—the sword. Tecmessa tries to question him as to his purpose, but receives abrupt and impatient answers. She adjures him by the gods, and gets the terrible reply—

“Knowest thou not
That I owe service to the gods no longer?”
For Ajax believes that they have wholly cast him off, and that between him and them the usual happy interchange, of benefit bestowed and duty paid gratefully in return, has now ceased for ever.

¹ Hector had prayed that Astyanax might surpass him in valour. Ajax, driven to self-assertion by the wrong that he is enduring, leaves it as his dying testimony that if his son can equal his sire in mighty deeds, he will of a truth do well.

² Teucer's was a different mother—the captive princess Hesione. Ajax wishes to commit his child to his own mother's tenderness, and to show her that he had thought of her when about to die.

³ Ajax so testifies to his abiding sense of the wrong done him by the chiefs. No more fatal contests for arms before unjust judges, is his implied meaning.

⁴ The broad shield.

Tecmessa reluctantly does his bidding, the tent-doors close, and while Ajax remains within them, sharpening Hector's fatal gift—the sword in which he now sees the predestined ender of his griefs,—the Chorus occupy the otherwise

vacant stage, and in their trouble call for sympathy on that dear fatherland which, as yet peacefully unconscious of its children's toil and peril, will soon resound with the voice of weeping for its prince's fall.

THE CHORUS.

1.

“O glorious Salamis! thou evermore
Dwellest at peace where breakers roar,
All see thee and beholding praise;
But I, through many a year of wretchedness,
In Trojan meadows wake to feel distress
And spend laborious days;
While o'er me broods the fear
Ere long to stand before
The Gate of Hades, hateful, dark, and drear.

2.

And Ajax now with hopeless anguish cursed,
Of all my woes the last and worst,
By the gods maddened (evil day!)
Once sent by thee resistless forth in arms
Now lonely broods; we weep the while his harms.
His valour in the fray
Forgot; his deeds of might,
So honoured at the first,
Fallen loveless from the base Atreidæ's sight.

3.

Ah! surely will his mother, full of years
Bowed by hoar eld, when of his woe she hears
And madness, raise the wail
Piercingly, piercingly;
No plaintive song of low-voiced nightingale
Be hers, but dirge mourned forth with shrill loud cry,
While blows upon her breast descend,
And her wild hands her whitened tresses rend.

4.

Better for him, by madness thus distressed,
To hide his head in Hades; who, though best
Of Greeks by noble race,
'Wildered and wandering,
Now of his former ways has lost the trace.
Sad sire! who soon must learn what evil thing
Has fallen upon thy son: a blast
Felt in thy line by none in ages past.”

Scarcely has the sound of this desponding song died away than the tent doors unclose, and Ajax comes forth once more,—not as he appeared carrying the scourge (the token of his madness) at the first; but calm and collected, holding Hector's weapon in his hand. His

mind is fully made up; but he declares it with studied ambiguity, dreading the efforts of Tecmessa and the Chorus to make him change it, for his is no mood for argument: the anguish that he feels is a grief into which none of them can fully enter, and which he shrinks from

striving to explain ; so he uses words which he knows will deceive his hearers, and make them let him go unhindered to the goal of his desire. "Half in pity, half in scorn, he disguises from his listeners a purpose too great for their sympathy."¹ It might have been otherwise had his faithful half-brother Teucer stood beside him, or if the green mound had not hidden the ashes of Achilles ; but now the strong man stands alone, with none whose pity he can accept, and his only object is to get rid of the weak with their wailings, in order that he may get his last work done, if only it might be, quietly.

"What is there," he says, "so hidden, but Time brings it to light ? so conspicuous, but Time conceals it ? so unexpected, but it comes to pass ? The firmest resolution may be shaken." And so his own has been, is what he wishes to have believed ; whereas he well knows himself that if shaken for an instant by Tecmessa's entreaties, his resolve is only now the firmer rooted for that passing storm. He goes on with like equivocation : "My hardened mind's keen edge has been softened by yonder woman's words, and I shrink from leaving her and my child, a widow and an orphan, among my foes." And he does not add what strict truth would have demanded, "But, though painful, that is what I mean to do." Instead, he continues : "Now I go to the bathing-place and the meadows near the shore, there to cleanse my stains, if so be I may escape the

heavy wrath of the goddess." This the well-pleased hearers take to mean the lustral purification with water, preparatory to the sacrifice offered to propitiate an angry deity. Ajax wishes to be so understood ; but his real purpose is to pour forth a darker stream, and his hope is not to turn aside Athene's wrath, but to withdraw from its reach into that under-world in which she has no jurisdiction. "Then," so he proceeds, "I shall bury this most hateful weapon in a desert place where no man comes. For nought have I had from the Greeks but evil since the day when Hector bestowed it on me ; so true is the proverb, 'A foe's gift is no gift, and brings no profit.' Let Night and Hades take it into their keeping." But this intended burial of his sword is one which will leave its point—the hilt only being sunk in the earth—to bury itself in its late wearer's breast, that, along with the corpse, the fatal glaive may pass into the keeping of the infernal deities. "Henceforth," adds Ajax, with a covert sneer, "we shall know how to give way to the gods, and learn to pay due honour to the *Atræidæ*"; secretly meaning, retire from all contest with them, and yield to the gods their protectors by departing this life. But the submission to them in life, which his words seem to promise, is a thing so foreign to his wonted character, that he finds it needful to account for it by these reflections on the teachings of nature :—

"Who rules must be obeyed—
Since nought so fierce and terrible but yields
Place to authority. Wild winter's snows
Make way for bounteous summer's flowery tread,
And night's sad orb retires for lightsome day
With his white steeds to illumine the glad sky.
The furious storm-blast leaves the groaning sea
Gently to rest. Yea, the all-subduer Sleep

¹ Jebb.

Frees whom he binds, nor holds enchained for aye.
And shall not men be taught the temperate will?"

—(Campbell.)¹

This being so, Tecmessa must go within and pray the gods for the full accomplishment of her husband's heart's desire: so must the Chorus, remembering should Teucer come to bid him care for his brother—according to Ajax's se-

cret meaning—by paying the last offices to the dead. And so the hero goes away, grasping the sword, his enemy a while back, now his friend, with these parting words of almost transparent double meaning:—

"For now I go whither I was to go:
Do ye my bidding,—soon mayhap to hear,
Ill as my case seems now, that I fare well."

The Chorus, left alone, burst into ecstatic joy. Deceived by the belief that their chief is about to be

reconciled to the gods and all to go well, they shout:—

1.

"I thrill with gladness, on joy's wings flying.
Sea-roaming Pan, great dance-leading king!
Pan! mighty Pan! come thy mirth to bring.
Leave the white snow on Cyllene's rock lying
In Cnosian measures thy wild limbs fling.
Now am I too in a mood for dancing—
Come, Phœbus, come o'er th' Icarian sea;
Come, Delian king, in our sight advancing,
In favour and kindness be present to me."

2.

Mars from our eyes has the grief-cloud lifted.
Good days return now in glory white,
Gladdening our swift ships with welcome light;
Since Ajax, his trouble forgotten, has gifted
The gods, and heedful performed each rite.
All things strong Time is for ever wasting;²
What hope is forbidden, now Ajax' rage
Against the Atreidæ, so fierce and lasting
In strife, finds Time's hand can its tempest assuage."

But this pleasant dream cannot last long. The dance and song are interrupted by the entrance of an anxious-looking messenger, who announces Teucer's return, and the peril which he ran, on entering the camp, from the Greeks, enraged at the wrong which his brother has done them. Having escaped their hands with difficulty, he sends word to Ajax on no account to leave his tent till the day is ended. Calchas

has revealed to him that the wrath of Athene will only endure till then; so that, if Ajax can live out the day, he may yet be saved. Teucer has remained to plead his cause before the assembled chiefs, and sends him this urgent message: "If it be true that I am too late, and that Ajax has already left his tent," is the messenger's conclusion, "he is a dead man, unless the wise Calchas is deceived."

¹ We congratulate Professor Campbell on the success which has attended his efforts to perfect his fine version of Sophocles—to which we hope to return at no very distant day.

² The reflection with which Ajax began his speech, which his duped followers show their delight in by repeating.

The terrified Chorus call forth Tecmessa, who exclaims on learning this that her husband has deceived her, and, dreading the very worst, goes forth with her child to seek him; as they likewise do by other paths.

And then ensues one of the few changes of scene in the extant Greek drama. Ajax is disclosed standing in a lonely spot beside the sea; his sword firmly planted in the earth, point upwards, ready to execute his dreadful purpose. He stands a few moments contemplating the gift of the hated Hector, embedded in the hostile soil, yet now by a strange turn of fate be-

come his only friend. And then he craves his last boon of the gods who forsook him, and whose service he renounced, but to whom Death is about to reconcile him. First he asks Zeus, his great ancestor, to see that Teucer learns the news of his death in time to protect his corpse from dishonour. Next he invokes Hermes, conductor of the dead, to put him to sleep swiftly and without any painful struggle. Having said this, he thinks of those whom he leaves behind,—of his foes for vengeance,—of his old parents, with pity for the anguish which he cannot spare them:—

“And to my aid I call the ever-virgin,
The ever-seeing every mortal woe,
The awful Furies with far-striding feet,
For witnesses that me the Atreidæ slay:
That what they see me suffer at their hands
They may wreak on them with an evil doom.
Go, oh ye swift avengers! lap the blood;
Spare not a man in all that mighty host.
But thou who o’er high heaven thy chariot drivest,
O Sun, when thou shalt view my fathers’ land,
Check thy gold rein, and my sad fate rehearse
To my old sire and to my hapless mother.
Ah! when she hears the tale, how wretchedly
Will through the city sound her wailing cry!
But what have I to do with vain laments?
Nay: to the deed—and with what speed I may.
O Death! O Death! now take me to thy care:
Yet *there*¹ to thee shall I speak face to face.
But thee, oh present torch of shining day,
Charioted Helios, thee I speak to now
For the last time of all, then never more.
O light! O sacred plain of Salamis!
O native soil where stands my fathers’ hearth!
Thou glorious Athens with thy friendly sons,—
Ye founts and streams here, too, ye Trojan plains
I call, now fare ye well my nourishers!
Thus Ajax speaks to you, nor speaks again:
My next words Hades’ denizens must hear.”

And, giving instant effect to his purpose, he falls on his sword.²

The trees and bushes conceal his body for a while; so that the

Chorus, who rush from opposing sides on the scene, do not see at first that their search is ended. They are still asking, “What fish-

¹ He is about to invoke Death at greater length, but checks himself with the reflection that in the dark realm to which he is passing he will commune for ever with its king. His last words shall be spoken to the god whose face he shall see no more.—Jebb.

² Timotheus of Zacynthus was especially celebrated for the way in which he enacted this scene.

erman of the sea, what Dryad of Olympus, what Naiad of the Bosphorus, has seen, and can point out to us, the stubborn roamer whom we seek?" when Tecmessa's wail resounds from the wood, and they see her bending over her lord's dead body—which love, quicker-sighted than friendship, has been the first to find. Then their lamentation bursts forth: "Alas, for our return home! O king, thou hast slain thy fellow-mariners. Alas! for thee, too, unhappy

woman! How has the evil omen contained in the name of Ajax fulfilled itself! Fools that we were, to leave him unwatched and alone!" Meantime Tecmessa is covering with her mantle the ghastly sight that, she says, not even a friend would bear to look on, and that would move even a foe to mourning,—which yet, a brief while ago, was the mighty Ajax. "Well," responds one of the Chorus, "may you raise the wail once and again at such a loss."

"So these things seem to thee; but I—I feel them,"

rejoins Tecmessa, in bitterness of soul. "Ah, my child, what hard yoke of slavery awaits us both!"

"How will Ulysses and the two sons of Atreus exult over our misfortunes!" say the Chorus.

"*Tec.* Ay, let them laugh and revel o'er his fall.

Perchance, albeit in life they missed him not,
Dead they will cry for him in straits of war;
For dullards know not goodness in their hand,
Nor prize the jewel till 'tis cast away.

To me more bitter than to them 'twas sweet,
His fate to him was gladsome; for he found
The lot he longed for, his self-chosen doom."

—(Campbell.)

Nor yet, she adds, need his foes glory in his downfall,—the gods have caused it, not they,—one day they will know what they have lost. Meantime Ajax is gone, leaving sorrow and lamentation to me.

Here, according to modern notions, the play should end, the curtain falling on its hero's dead body, and his wife clinging in passionate grief to her lost protector. But a Greek audience claimed something more, and demanded to know what fate was in reserve for that mighty corpse: honourable burial—the sign that the offence committed by Ajax in his madness was not held by the army to have outweighed his former benefits; or that refusal of funeral rites by which, what in those days was held, justice chastised offenders who had gone beyond her power to strike in any other fashion.

Accordingly, to that contest in the warrior's wounded spirit of which the spectators have just beheld the disastrous termination, is to succeed another more open one, between Teucer and the Atreidæ, which might end in the destruction of the followers and the faithful brother of Ajax, as did the heroic conflict of Antigone with the tyrant Creon for the burial of Polynices; and its happier conclusion is destined to calm the minds of the audience with a sense of peace—albeit a sad peace—after war, and of sorrowful resignation, akin to that produced by the reconciliation scene at the end of "Romeo and Juliet." To appreciate this second crisis of the tragedy, it is needful to bear in mind the immense importance attributed by the ancients to the due performance of burial ceremonies, as well as the extent to which they

considered that vengeance on an enemy's dead body might lawfully be carried—to both which Homer's "Iliad" bears witness. We can then enter in some degree into the feelings of the Greek audience as they see Teucer—returned too late to try to save his brother's life, but not too late to defend his honour

and execute his last behests—enter with a cry of sorrow, and ask whether the sad report that his dearest Ajax is dead can indeed be true.

"Saddest of all sights that I ever saw!" he exclaims; "path of all the paths I ever trod that has most grieved my heart! To hear of this was anguish: to see it is death."

"Uncover him: let me see the very worst.
O ghastly sight! that speaks of evil daring,
Of woes how great the seed for my undoing.
For whither can I go? amid what men?
I who in such a strait gave thee no aid.
Or how shall Telamon, thy sire and mine,
On me cast any look of cheerful love
Returning without thee? that sire whom joy
Itself scarce wooes into a pleasant smile!
What stern reproach will he repress? what names
Call his war-captive's base-born son?¹ who left
Thee, dearest Ajax, in his coward fear,
Or by thy death to win thy wealth and home."

Having thus predicted his own exile from Salamis, Teucer turns again to the fearful sight before him, and stands a while contemplating the sword of Hector driven through the breast of Ajax, even as the belt of Ajax had lashed Hector to Achilles' chariot. "That sword was truly forged by a fury," is his conclusion; "Hades, cruel workman, verily made that girdle."

But his lamentation has to give place to immediate action, for Menelaus, the representative to the Athenian audience of their Spartan foe, is seen advancing. He comes in attended by a herald, and pronounces his official veto on the burial. "Forasmuch," he says—professing to speak in the name of the Greeks—"as this man, our professed ally and friend, has proved a worse enemy to us than any Trojan, who, but for a favouring god, would have caused us to lie where he now lies, no man—be he who he may—

shall prevail to inter him; but his corpse shall be flung out on the sands for the sea-birds to devour. We could not control him living; at least dead, he shall not disobey us." This outburst of mean spite is covered by a solemn protest against the ills of insubordination. The safeguard alike of the state and of the army is fear (foremost in the Spartan view) and reverence for law. Men cannot follow their own will and pleasure without paying a penalty. The speech concludes by renewed ignoble exaltation over the fallen. "Things alternate," says Menelaus; "he who lies there was fiery and overbearing of old: it is my turn now to have haughty thoughts. My charge is as follows: Seek not to bury this man, lest while you do so you yourself fall into his grave." "Champion of man's law, beware how you break the gods' law by depriving the dead of his due," exclaim the Chorus; and then Teucer rises to the

¹ Teucer, "the son of the slave-woman," quails at the thought of his father's violence, while Ajax, the true-born heir of Telamon's honours, had shrunk from the thought of his father's grief and shame.—(Jebb). Teucer is not unworthy of his brother, but he is inferior in courage as in position.

defence. "Well," he says, "may the low-born go astray when the high-descended Menelaus speaks so falsely." He denies his claim to jurisdiction over Ajax whether alive or dead—an independent ally in no wise subject either to him or to Agamemnon, who came to Troy to keep the oath which he had sworn to Tyndareus, not to serve them, and who shall now receive honourable burial in spite of the Atreidæ and their heralds. "The bowman," sneers Menelaus, "is bold; how great would be his presumption if he bore the soldier's shield?" "Well may a man be bold if he has justice on his side," rejoins Teucer. The altercation proceeds. Menelaus tries to end it by reiterating his veto: "I say this, and nothing else, You shall not bury this man." "My answer is simply this, That buried he shall be," replies the undaunted defender. The Spartan, finding the direct method a failure, tries whether an apologue will succeed better. Changing his tone from the violent to the sarcastic, he begins: "I have seen ere now a tongue-valiant man urging sailors to put to sea in bad weather, who, when the tempest fell upon the ship, lay speechless on deck, hidden by his robe, for whoso would to walk upon him. Even so, in the little cloud which you now despise, may lurk a storm that will extinguish your boisterous clamour." But the archer has no notion of being hit and not shooting in return; and the arrow which he sends back is sharper and better directed than his adversary's. "I too," he says, "have seen an exceedingly foolish man insulting the misfortunes of his neighbours, when a person very like myself in temper spake thus to him: 'Do no wrong to the dead; if you do, you will suffer for it.' Such was his admonition to that unhappy man. Now that man I behold at present, and

he is, as I think, none other than myself. Is my riddle plain?" Menelaus feels that he is being worsted in the encounter of words, and hastily departs, muttering his intention to employ stronger weapons.

The strife of tongues is for a while hushed; and Teucer, while busying himself about the interment, places the corpse under the guardianship of Tecmessa and the young Eurysakes, who has been hastily fetched lest his father's foes should harm him. He bids the child kneel beside the body of Ajax with the symbols of supplication in his little hand,—the three tresses cut from the locks of the wife, the brother, and the son; knowing that reverence for Zeus, protector of suppliants, will deter the Greeks from violence to the dead so long as the child clings to the body. Teucer leaves the widow and orphan for a brief season alone, protected by this solemn imprecation: "Should any of the army dare to snatch thee from this corpse, may he perish miserably, and find no grave,—his whole race being cut up by the roots like this severed lock of hair."

There is something ineffably touching in the group so presented to the spectator's eyes—the bereaved wife heart-broken, the little child, too young to know his loss, kneeling beside their dead guardian; and, by a strange reversal of their positions, protecting by their very weakness him who but an hour ago was himself their powerful protector. Just as the *Œdipus* of Sophocles, in the height of his outward prosperity, is shown to us as the most wretched of mortals, but, become a helpless outcast, wields in his feeble age a power which he never held in the vigour of his manhood,—so here, too, the Athenian dramatist brings into powerful relief the contrast between what things seem and what they are—that irony

of circumstances which struck him as it strikes all thoughtful beholders of human life. The mighty arm of the stalwart Ajax, but yesterday the bulwark of the Greek host, is not able to-day to ward off insult from his own head; while his trembling captive now defends her master, and the rage of wrathful kings

encounters a barrier which it shrinks from forcing in the tiny hand of a little orphan boy.

Thus Tecmessa and her son kneel beside the fallen champion, while the Chorus once more raise a strain that tells of their weariness of war, and their longing, now growing hopeless, for their distant home:—

1.

“When shall the tale of wandering years be done?

When shall arise our exile's latest sun?

Oh, where shall end the incessant woe

Of troublous spear-encounter with the foe,

Through this vast Trojan plain,

Of Grecian arms the lamentable stain?

2.

Would he had gone to inhabit the wide sky,
Or that deep home of death where millions lie,

Who taught our Grecian men the way

To use vile swords and knit the dense array!

His toil gave birth to toil

In endless line. He made mankind his spoil.

3.

He forced me to forego

The garland, and the goblet's bounteous flow.

Yea, and the flute's dear noise,

And night's serenest joys;

Ay me! nor only these,

The fruits of golden ease,

But Love, but Love—O crowning sorrow!—

Hath ceased for me. I may not borrow

Sweet thoughts from him to smooth my dreary bed,

Where dank night-dews fall ever on my head,

Lest once I might forget the sadness of the morrow.

4.

Even here in Troy, Ajax was erst my rock,

From darkling fears, and midst the battle-shock

My bulwark in huge might;

Now he is sunk in night

And horror. Where again

Shall gladness heal my pain?

Ah! were I where the waters hoary,

Beneath wild Sunium's upland vale,

Plash the pine-shadowed seaward promontory;

That holiest Athens once more I might hail!”

—(Campbell.)

The song ceases, as a yet more formidable opponent than Menelaus is seen advancing in the person of Agamemnon, who meets Teucer as he returns once more to take his stand beside the dead body of his brother, with bitter taunts to the man who, being only a captive's

son, has dared to defy his authority, and to deny his jurisdiction. In the course of his speech he depreciates the merits of the slain Ajax, and asks, “Was he the only Greek who played the man? where went he where I was not equally forward? Not mere size and brute

strength, but prudence and wisdom, win the day. Learn to be wiser than to speak thus boldly, insolently, and with a freedom which does not belong to you, on behalf of a man who is no longer anything but a pale shadow ; or, if you must plead his cause, at least bring some free-born advocate whose speech I can understand, instead of deafening me with your barbarous chatter."

Teucer's reply is worthy of the son of Telamon and Hesione—wedded, indeed, on unequal terms through the fatal chance of war, yet a princess still. It is the more effective that it is some time before he can think of repelling the insult to himself, absorbed as he is at first in deep pity for his brother, hitherto more fortunate than himself ; but now lying dishonoured, his great deeds forgotten, and his foes insulting him in death. You *shall* turn round in spite of yourself, he seems to say to Agamemnon ; I will force you to look once more on the living Ajax,—whom you are endeavouring so completely to forget,—as he stood, the last bulwark of your ships, to stem the onslaught of the victorious Hector. "Alas !" he cries, "how fleeting and treacherous a thing is gratitude to the dead, since he for whose sake thou, Ajax, hast often toiled and endangered thy life, remembers not one of all thy benefits, but has flung them aside into utter forgetfulness." Then turning from the dead, for whom he feels a Greek's compassion, to the living, he says to Agamemnon with a burst of indignation : "Speaker of many and senseless words, hast thou no memory left thee of the day when, driven back within your ramparts, with Hector bounding over them to fire your ships, you were delivered by him whose exploits thou now deniest—the man who through thy fault now lies—as thou but for him wouldst

be lying—dead ? Such were his deeds ! and I too stood beside him then—I, the slave, the barbarian's son, as thou callest me,—*thou*, grandson of the barbarian Pelops, and son of the impious Atreus, by a Cretan, doomed for her sin by her own father to a watery grave ; whereas my sire was Telamon, who by his peerless valour won my mother, the royal daughter of Laomedon, awarded to him as the prize of his prowess by Heracles himself. How then can I, the son of two such parents, shame by my advocacy that dead brother, whom thou, after all his toil, seekest to thrust out unburied ? Know this at least, that if you Greek chieftains cast him out, three other corpses shall lie beside his." As he says this, he points to where the widow and orphan kneel in speechless woe beside their dead, prepared to die along with Teucer rather than relax their grasp. "I too," he adds, "had far better die fighting for him than for the wife of Menelaus ; yet, ere the fray begin, I charge thee take thought for thyself, lest I give thee good cause to curse the courage that led thee to assail me."

It is at this critical moment, when the fight to which only one termination can be expected—for how can Teucer and the brave little band from Salamis long successfully defy the whole Greek army?—is on the point of beginning, that an unlooked-for mediator appears in the person of Ulysses. Besides the Sophoclean irony of language and of situation, there is, as has been observed, a third form, which may be called the irony of circumstances, employed by the great Attic tragedian—that of exhibiting men as acting much below, or much above, their usual character, under the pressure produced by some unwonted occurrence. This irony finds expression in the closing

scene of the "Ajax," as in its opening; for just as at its beginning the spectator marvelled to see its generous hero acting ungenerously, so at its close he was surprised to hear the accents of magnanimity from the lips of Ulysses, who had been reviled throughout its course for meanness. That worldly wisdom which had given him success in his contest with a braver man than himself, now shows him the imprudence, after his point has been gained, of pushing the quarrel any further; and he at once enacts the part of Agamemnon's sage adviser and of the

maintainer of the rights of the departed.

"I conjure thee by the gods," he says to the angry general, "not to let thy wrath make thee trample upon justice. This man was of late my worst foe in all the army, yet I will not on that account shrink from saying that, Achilles only excepted, he proved himself the best warrior of all the Greeks who came to Troy. How wrong, then, it would be to do dishonour to him now; since it is not he, but the laws of the gods themselves, that would so suffer harm."

"No hatred should have scope

To offend the noble spirits of the dead.

Agamemnon. Wilt thou thus fight against me on his side?

Ulysses. Yes: though I hated him while hate was noble.

Ag. Why, thou shouldst trample him the more, being dead.

Ul. Rejoice not, king, in feasts that soil thy fame.

Ag. Remember what he was thou graces't so.

Ul. A noisome enemy; but his life was great.

Ag. And wilt thou honour such a pestilent corpse?

Ul. Unkindness yields to nobleness of thought."—(Campbell.)

Agamemnon can hardly refrain from turning his anger against his counsellor. Restraining it by an effort, he asks if he and his brother are to be made to appear cowards, who shrank from carrying out their purpose for dread of Teucer's threats. Assured by Ulysses that the Greeks will rather admire his respect for right, he reiterates still the question, "Do you really bid me to suffer this burial to go forward?" as if he could scarcely believe his own ears; and ends by throwing the responsibility of the whole matter on Ulysses, for whose sake entirely he makes this great concession,—as he would even a greater one, he assures him,—to please a man for whom he has such great regard. Ulysses accepts the charge, giving this significant reason for his persistence—"I shall one day need burial myself"; a hint which leads the audience to

reflect on the different returns home, and far different funeral rites, which await Agamemnon and his counsellor. While the prudent son of Laertes thus seeks the future in the present, and sees a warning to himself in other men's misfortunes, the son of Atreus departs, provoking Nemesis to inflict the now fast-coming blow by his final exclamation—"I yield to thee; do as thou wilt. But as for the man who lies there, living or dead, I shall hate him with a perfect hatred." The honours of the victory remain with Ulysses, who conquers Teucer's ill-will by offering him a friendship as thorough as his former enmity had been, and by proposing to join him in paying the last offices to the slain. This offer, indeed, Teucer dares not accept. Ajax departed unreconciled to Ulysses, who was the true cause of his downfall. Yet while the brother dreads provoking

his ghost by admitting his foe's aid, he cannot refuse his admiration. "You," he says in effect, "stood living before your worst enemy dead, and neither insulted him yourself, nor suffered him to be insulted by that mad pair of brethren, whom may the Olympian Father, the ever-mindful Fury, and Justice who perfects all things, destroy with an evil destruction, even as they wished to cast forth this man to dishonour. Yet, son of Laertes, I dare not let you take part in these rites, lest I should vex the dead. In anything else

assist us, and know that we hold you to have acted thoroughly well by us." Ulysses once more gracefully yields to Teucer's wish, and takes his leave.

Then at last can the long delayed rites begin,—the waters flow into the laver, and the bright arms can be fetched, according to the dead man's wish, for earth to hide, and the mourners be marshalled in due order. The chorus speak their last word over the strange sights they have seen,—the fall of Ajax, the reconciliation of Teucer and Ulysses :—

"Oft we know not till we see.

Weak is human prophecy.

Judge not, till the hour have taught thee

What the destinies have brought thee."—(Campbell.)

And, so far as the play has a moral, it lies here ; for it was his sense of the uncertainty of mortal life which kept Ulysses from the mistakes which others made ; it was the self-reliance which hid this from him that laid the mighty Ajax low.

The reader who contrasts, as we set out by suggesting, the latest extant play of Sophocles with his earliest, will be struck by the progress made by its aged author towards the modern point of view,—alike in "ethical reflectiveness" and in greater complexity of interest ; since in the "Philoctetes" our attention is no longer bespoken by a single figure, but by a pair—two human forms, representing severally age and youth, suffering and energy, with each a marked individual character, fitted to act powerfully on the other, and affecting us by the "climax of emotions" produced by such mutual action.

The moral of the "Philoctetes" is also nobler, if its tragic pathos is less deep, than that of the "Ajax." Its hero's long endurance of his wholly undeserved sufferings stamps him as a higher style of man than the impetuous

son of Telamon ; and his history brings out the superiority of moral to merely mental endowments, as strikingly as does the tale of "Ajax" the inferiority of physical strength to prudence.

While Ajax has been doing brave deeds before Troy, Philoctetes has been spending ten long years of anguish in the lonely isle of Lemnos. For having sailed with the other chieftains on the great expedition in command of a contingent of ships, and unwarily entered the precincts of the Nymph Chrysa, he was bitten in the foot by the serpent-guardian of her temple, and left behind, as Homer tells us, by his companions as unfit for war. To this Sophocles adds that the noisomeness of his wound had so distressed his comrades, and his cries of pain so distracted and disturbed them, even when endeavouring to make their offerings to the gods, that they had taken advantage of his slumbers during an interval of ease to desert him,—leaving behind with him such scanty supplies as they could spare. But their selfishness wrought its own punishment. The bow of Hercules, Troy's first captor, belongs to

Philoctetes. It was his guerdon for lighting the dying hero's funeral-pyre on Mount Ceta. And the gods have decreed that without that bow and its lawful holder, Troy shall not be taken this second time. The godlike Achilles, the mighty Ajax, and many other heroes, have therefore wrought their great works in vain, so far as the capture of the city is concerned. But as the ten years are about to expire, the Greeks learn from the captive Helenus the two essential conditions of their success: the one, to send for Neoptolemus, the young son of Achilles, from Scyros,—the other, to fetch the wronged and deserted Philoctetes from Lemnos. Ulysses, by whose advice he was first forsaken, volunteers to perform this latter task, and takes Neoptolemus for his comrade, as personally unknown to the man whom they set out to seek,—formidable still, in spite of his weakness, as the possessor of the unerring bow, the darter of the deadly arrows, dipt in the poison of the Lernaean hydra.

The youth's inexperience, and eagerness for victory, make him at first a pliant tool in the hands of the wily Ulysses, with whom he is seen at the opening of the drama, newly landed in the island, descriing afar the cave which has sheltered the outcast, searching it for tokens that he is yet alive, and receiving his first lessons in deceit. He is to seek out the solitary, and disclose his true name to him; but to pretend that he is returning home from Troy, deeply offended with the Greeks. The feigned cause of his anger is to be the refusal to him of his father's arms;¹ and those arms, unjustly given to Ulysses, as he is to profess to think, are to join Philoctetes to

Neoptolemus by the link of a common enmity. A safe passage to his Melian home in the young stranger's ship will prove an irresistible bait to the lonely sufferer so soon as his confidence has been won; and once on board, there will be no difficulty in transporting him, willingly or unwillingly, to Troy.

At this point the youth's truthful nature shows symptoms of revolt. "Son of Laertes," he says to his monitor in evil, "I hate to subject myself justly to a reproach which I abhor. Neither I, nor, as I hear, my father, have ever liked to effect our purpose by any base artifice. Let me carry off the man by force, not by fraud; surely we have nothing to dread from a lame man. It is true that, as your chosen assistant, I could not bear to desert you in your undertaking; yet, prince, for my own part, I had far rather act nobly and fail, than act basely even for victory." "Son of a great father," replies Ulysses, "I too, when young, was more forward with my hand than with my tongue. But I have learned otherwise by experience, which has taught me that men are easier moved by words than by deeds." He goes on to remove Neoptolemus from his first, and best, thoughts about the matter, by pointing out to him how he can no more take Troy without Philoctetes than Philoctetes can without him; and how the deadly poison on the arrows would make any attempt to capture their owner by violence most unsafe. Neoptolemus yields, and consents to beguile Philoctetes. Meantime, while awaiting his return to the cave, Ulysses having withdrawn, the youth and the sailors who form the Chorus give vent in song to the pity which the sight of that lonely dwelling

¹ A link between the last and earliest drama of Sophocles; although, on the contest for those arms between Ajax and Ulysses and its consequences, as depicted in the play already considered, the "*Philoctetes*" is wholly silent.

has wakened in them—where so much anguish has been endured, with wild beasts for its solitary spectators.

Before long a sound is heard, as the Chorus say, not like a shepherd's piping to his flock, but the shrill cry of one in pain. Philoctetes has borne his ten years of anguish bravely; nevertheless at times its sharpness gets beyond even his powers of endurance. "The waves which cannot shake this rock of a man, can at least make him re-echo their roar."¹ Besides, physical pain is not all he has to endure. It assails a spirit wrung by the treacherous unkind-

ness of friends and comrades,—a heart sickened by the weariness of a long deferred hope. Sufferings so manifold, emphasised by Sophocles with the fearless unrestraint of a Greek dramatist, win for Philoctetes the whole sympathies of the audience, as he wearily drags himself on to the stage, sees strangers before him in the dress of his own dear land, and seems ready at once to fall into the trap that has been laid for him. Their displeasure at seeing the young hero so unworthily employed is deepened by the elder one's affectionate address to him and to his company:—

"Your dress is Greek,
The very dearest of all garbs to me;
But I would hear your voice. Turn not away
In dread as from a man grown fierce and cruel,
But pitying one unhappy and alone,
Thus desolate, a friendless sufferer,
Speak, if with purpose kind ye come."

Neoptolemus, embarrassed by his consciousness of deceit, answers in few words first that they are Greeks, and then that he is the son of Achilles, and now on his homeward voyage; and when his hearer's exuberant expressions of joy at this information are over, asks in his turn the name of the island-dweller who speaks of himself as a sharer in the great armament against Troy. "Can it be unknown to you?" asks the solitary; and on hearing the young stranger falsely affirm that it is so, a sorrowful sense of his isolation from Greek thought and interest adds a fresh pang to the sufferings of Philoctetes—and he says, "How manifold are my afflictions, and how the gods must hate me, if not even a rumour of this my wretchedness has reached either my home or Greece; and meantime they who so godlessly cast me out are merry and say nothing about me, while my disease ever flourishes and grows greater!" Then, with a

pathetic sense of dignity in misery, he introduces himself to the son of great Achilles as his father's comrade Philoctetes, son of Pœas, the possessor of the weapons of Heracles. The sad story follows of his desertion, of his struggles to live, and of his hopes of return often frustrated; since voyagers, driven from time to time by stress of weather to his side of Lemnos, had given him small supplies of food or fresh garments, but had never been willing to transport him home. Neoptolemus, having heard this, begins his process of deception, and recites the wrong which he too professes to have sustained from Ulysses.

In the course of his fiction real facts are disclosed which surprise and grieve his hearer. First, the death of Achilles, over which Philoctetes mourns with genuine sorrow. Then, in answer to the question why Ajax did not interpose to secure the arms of Achilles to his son, comes the reply that so he doubtless would

¹ Lessing.

have done, had not he also been numbered with the dead. "Alas !" cries Philoctetes, "he then is gone, while the son of Tydeus and that spurious child of Sisyphus¹ imposed on Laertes seem immortal." Next comes the inquiry for the good old Nestor. The answer is that he lives, but in great sorrow for the loss of his beloved son Antilochus.

"Ah !" repeats the exile, "where can we look for comfort when men such as these die, and Ulysses, of whose death I longed to hear, lives on !" "He is a cunning wrestler," rejoins the other ; "yet, O Philoctetes, the wisest devices sometimes get entangled."² Then Patroclus, chief friend of Achilles, is asked for :—

"*Neop.* He, too, is dead : to tell thee all in brief,
War never slays a bad man willingly,
But snatches evermore away the good."

Since this is so, does that worthless prater, Thersites, yet live? is the next inquiry. "So I hear," is the answer.

"*Phil.* He must ; since never bad thing perisheth,
For the divinities still keep it safe,
And crafty, froward men from Hades turn,
Despatching straightway there the just and good."

The pathetic effect of this dialogue is great. It exalts our conception of Philoctetes by bidding us see in him the last survivor of the men who had seen Heracles and the mightiest heroes of Greece ; while it bespeaks for him our pity, as, weakened by suffering, he has to learn the death of his own favourite comrades, and to feel himself cast for help and compassion on a

new generation,—the sons of the great men with whom he was wont to consort. The fate which had bid him outlive in his helpless condition the gallant Patroclus, the mighty Ajax and Achilles bravest of the brave, and which is calling him to succeed where they failed, seems rather cruel than kind in its irony, as it goes on sounding

"Names in his ears
Of all the lost adventurers his peers,—
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost ! one moment knelled the woe of years."

—(Browning.)

The mournful memories of the past are however interrupted by the claims of the present, when Neoptolemus goes on to say that he himself is hastening back to Greece from a camp where gods and men alike do such injustice. "Rocky Scyros and my own peaceful home will suffice me for the future. Farewell, son of Cetean Peas ! May the gods heal thee

according to thy desire." Even these parting words bring the exile's father, and the hill where he received the glorious bequest of Heracles, suddenly within his range of vision. The parentage and courtesy of the stranger have revived hope long dead in his mind ; and so he at once directs his earnest supplication to his old friend's son,—the pitying audience understanding the

¹ The favourite reproach on the birth of Ulysses.

² Neoptolemus here delivers an unconscious prophecy of the final result ; but he is even now playing his part of reviler of Ulysses *con amore*, vexed at the unworthy act to which he has constrained him.

while that either its failure which desires, can only bring him sorrow he dreads, or its success which he row.

“*Phil.* Now by thy father, by thy mother,—nay,
By all thy love e’er cherished in thy home,
Suppliant I beg thee, leave me not thus lone,
Forlorn in all my misery which thou seest,
In all thou hast heard of here surrounding me,
But take me by the way. Such freight, I know,
Is full of trouble and vexatious care,
Yet venture ! Surely to the noble mind
All shame is hateful and all kindness blest,
And shame would be thy meed, didst thou fail here ;
But, in thus doing, thou shalt have glorious fame,
When I return alive to Ceta’s vale.
Come, ’tis the labour not of one whole day ;
So thou durst take me, fling me where thou wilt
O’ the ship—in hold, prow, stern, or wheresoe’er
I may least trouble those on board with me.
Ah ! by great Zeus, the suppliant’s friend, comply,
My son, be softened ! See, where I am fallen
Thus on my knees before thee, though so weak,
Crippled and powerless. Ah ! forsake me not
Thus far from human footstep. Take me, take me ! ”
—(Campbell.)

The Chorus, according to the programme, beg Neoptolemus to yield to this entreaty, which he does, adding the equivocal words, “Only may the gods bring us safely from hence to the land which we desire.” His own secret hope is that Philoctetes may be persuaded, when he learns the greatness of the issue, to wish like the rest to direct his course to Troy.

Philoctetes expresses boundless gratitude ; and then his eagerness to depart is quickened by the appearance of another follower of Ulysses, who, disguised as a merchant, tells a feigned tale of how the Greeks have sent out an expedition to seize on Neoptolemus, and a true

one, in most particulars, of their search for Philoctetes ; who, feeling his former hatred roused to the fullest activity by this fresh injury, declares that sooner than hearken to the prayer of Ulysses to accompany him as a friend to Troy, he would give ear to the hateful viper that has maimed him so cruelly. Accordingly pressing Neoptolemus to hasten their departure, he goes with him to bid farewell to his late poor abode, the sheltering cave ; to fetch from thence the herb which used to still his pain, and to see that none of his arrows are left behind. As they set off on this errand, the Chorus sing :—

1st Strophe.

“Not by sight, by hearing only,
I have learned how mighty Saturn’s son
To a wheel aye whirling round
Bad Ixion helpless bound.
But no other have I found
By a fate more strange and lonely
Than this sufferer here undone ;
Whom, though just, an unjust doom,
Ill his innocence requiting,
Sets here in a living tomb.
And I marvel how on this surge-beaten steep
He, nought hearing save the sound of waves affrighting,
Hold on tearful life could keep ;

1st Antistrophe.

Where no helper in his sorrow
 Came to guide his failing feet, or hear
 How the sufferer made his moan,
 Answering moan with pitying groan
 As dark gore the wound made known ;
 None who ease for it could borrow,
 Plucking herbs from earth to cheer,
 And that fierce pain lull to sleep
 Stanching blood from deep sore gushing ;
 Where he all alone must creep,
 Like some child of kindly nurse's aid bereft,
 When, to seek for strengthening food or balm pain hushing,
 Him awhile that anguish left.

2d Strophe.

Never fed him holy earth's grain golden,
 Or her other gifts to toiling men ;
 He to his far-darting bow beholden,
 By winged arrows won for food winged prey :
 He for years now ten,
 Hapless one ! might never drink where flowing
 Wine with ruby drops the goblets filled,
 But with tottering footsteps day by day
 To some standing pool for water going,
 Burning thirst so stilled.

2d Antistrophe.

Now the son of heroes for his sadness
 Gives him bliss, and glory for his woes
 Brings him, when the months are filled, with gladness
 In his ship back to his fathers' hall
 Where Spercheius flows,
 Dear to Melian nymphs ; whence near ascending
 To the gods with brazen shield in might
 Rose the hero¹ in his fiery pall,—
 High on Ceta's top his labours ending,
 Wrapt in heavenly light."

These last words are meant for the ear of Philoctetes,—now seen returning from the cave,—to suggest to him the hope of a glorious termination to his own sufferings, akin to that which raised Heracles from the purifying fires of Ceta to Olympus. But their true force is at present hidden from the singers as from the audience. It is not till the end of the play that they know that the demigod was even then rising up from his golden throne, and grasping his shield of brass, to hasten to succour his comrade of days gone by.

For, before this can be, two more

conflicts await the sufferer. The first is with physical pain. As he reappears on the scene he stops, arrested by a sudden pang of such deadly anguish that the utmost efforts of his resolved will are powerless to carry him forward ; and the strong man has to cry out for pity. The spectators, seeing for themselves what must have been his lonely agonies during the past ten years, are prepared to comprehend his stubborn refusal to have anything more to do with those who, in their selfishness, abandoned him to that loneliness, and feel stronger regret than before at the success of those

¹ Heracles.

deserters' schemes. At the first cry of pain, Neoptolemus kindly asks, "What is it?" Philoctetes dreads to jeopardise his escape from the island; so he sets his teeth firmly, and answers, "Nothing. Let us go, my son." But his torment increases; and the cries burst from his lips in spite of all his efforts to retain them. He calls the gods to help him; and as his tortures pierce sharper and sharper, he sadly owns that he cannot hide them, although they are working his undoing. "Seize thy sword, and cut off my foot," he exclaims, maddened by the paroxysm of an anguish terrible and wholly past the power of words to express; complicated, too, by the fear that the youth whom the merchant's story declared himself to be in danger from the Greeks, will refuse to tarry until that cruel tormentor, pain, has sated itself and will

depart. But Neoptolemus stands firmly by his side; and expecting the stupor which was wont to succeed to his sharper sufferings, Philoctetes puts his precious bow into his hand, with the charge to let no one else take it, as he would not be the murderer of the man who trusts him. His young friend gives the required promise, and receives it along with these words: "Take it, my son; and pray that it may not bring you trouble as it has done me and its first owner." Soon the speaker's pain returns with fresh violence; redoubled shrieks reveal the extremity of his sufferings, and with them are mingled wild cries for vengeance on Ulysses and the Atreidæ, and prayers that they may soon feel what he feels now. Once more his thoughts turn to the only sure remedy for pain:—

"O Death! O Death! how is it that being called
Thus daily, thou canst never come to me?
My son, prove now thy birth, and, lifting me,
Carry me to this far-famed Lemnian fire.
There win my thanks and burn me. Once I did
Like service to the son of Zeus to this,
And for my guerdon won these arms thou holdest."

But presently the pitying bystanders see that the pain is relaxing its grasp; for the sufferer begins to sleep,—uneasily at first starting up with fears to be left alone, and

with muttered and scarcely intelligible requests,—but presently with a sounder slumber. The Chorus watch him, and sing:—

"Sleep, who know'st not pain or grief,
Breathing soft, come here,
King of blissful might!
On his eyes the soothing light
Hold for his relief.
Come to heal and cheer."

After awhile the sleeper awakens refreshed, and comparatively free from pain. Delighted with the faithful watch that Neoptolemus has kept over him, he prepares to set off with him to his ship. It is now that the younger man's soul is wrung by the older man's unsuspecting confidence, and that he feels the full baseness of abusing such

perfect trust. The deed which startled him by its hideousness when he beheld it from a distance, looks uglier still close at hand. And the soul's tragedy, which the spectators have been sadly watching, takes to their joy an unexpected turn, as they see Neoptolemus all at once stand still, and hear him ask, with an exclamation

of mental distress, what he is to do in an emergency that wholly perplexes him.

Philoctetes naturally misunderstands him, and asks if the annoyance of his disease has prevailed with him to change his purpose. "All," replies the youth, "is an annoyance when a man forsakes his own nature to do what is alien to it." "What can you do in this unworthy of him that begot you?" rejoins Philoctetes. "Shame awaits me anyhow," is the answer; "al-

ready disgraced in my own sight by my secret purpose, I must be shamed in yours by disclosing it." And then he tells the truth: the kind offer to take the sufferer home has been a deception; the real intention is to conduct him—for his own good as well as that of the army—to Troy. "I am lost, I am betrayed!" exclaims Philoctetes. "Give me back my bow directly." Neoptolemus refuses, and thereupon the exile pours out his wrath upon him:—

"O thou fire,
Thou terror of the world! Dark instrument
Of ever-hateful guile! What hast thou done?
How hast thou cheated me! Art not ashamed
To look on him who sued to thee for shelter?
Thou hast ta'en my life away with yonder bow.
Ah! give it back, my son, I pray thee, give!
By all thy father worshipped, rob me not
Of life. Ah me! He will not speak to me,
But turns away, obdurate to retain it.
O ye, my comrades in this desert place,
Wild creatures of the hills, O promontories,
Creeks, precipices of the rocks, to you
And your familiar presence¹ I complain
Of this dark deed of great Achilles' son.
Sworn to convey me home, to Troy he bears me;
And under pledge of his right hand hath ta'en
And holds from me perforce my wondrous bow,
The sacred gift of Zeus-born Heracles,
Thinking to wave it 'mid the Achæan host
Triumphantly for his. In conquering me
He vaunts as of some valorous feat; nor knows
He is spoiling a mere corse, an empty dream,
The shadow of a vapour. In my strength
He ne'er had vanquished me. Even as I am
He could not but by guile.² Now, all forlorn,
I am abused, deceived. What must I do?
Nay, give it me. Nay, yet be thy true self.
Thou art silent. I am lost! O misery!
Rude face of rock, back I return to thee
And thy twin gateway, robbed of arms and food,
To wither in thy cave companionless;
No more with these mine arrows to destroy
Or flying bird or mountain-roving beast;
But, O unhappy, I myself must be
The feast of those on whom I fed, the chase
Of that I hunted, and shall give my blood

¹ There is something very affecting in this. The dweller in solitary places had rejoiced to be restored to the communion of his own kind. But he has found treachery there; so his disappointed heart is reduced to appeal once more for pity to the mute witnesses of its sufferings.

² These words are especially calculated to wound the pride of Neoptolemus, and show him what an inglorious part he is acting.

In quittance for their death,—the deed of one
Who seemed all ignorant of sinful guile.

Perish,—nay, not until I learn if yet
Thou wilt repent,—if not, my curse on thee.

Neop. O, I am troubled sore. What must I do?
Would I had never left mine island home!—(Campbell.)

At this critical juncture Ulysses appears, as the evil genius of the son of Achilles, to hinder him from turning back to the right road,—avows himself the author of the plot, and declares his purpose of taking Philoctetes, if needful, by force to Troy. To his appeal to the Lemnian earth and flame kindled by Hephæstus, he replies by alleging the will of Zeus as made known by the prophecy of Helenus. "Was I then born a slave and no freeman?" asks Philoctetes, seeing

his determination; while the soothing reply of Ulysses, that he is peer of their bravest, and on that account summoned to join in their enterprise, only makes him threaten to kill himself rather than obey him. Forcibly detained by the attendants from casting himself from the crag, he first says sadly, "Hands, taken by this man, what you suffer for lack of your well-loved weapon!" Then he turns wrathfully on the person to whom he owes alike his old and his new trouble, and says to Ulysses—

"O void of every sound and liberal thought,
How hast thou once again got round me, caught me,
Coming unknown to me behind this youth
Too good for thee, worthy to be my friend;
Who only knew to do the thing enjoined him,
And who now plainly grieves to see his fault
And what I suffer from it! Thy mean soul,
Spying from hidden places, him unapt,
Unwilling, taught to be thus wisely wicked.
And now, vile man! thou thinkst to lead me bound
Off from this coast on which thou once didst fling me
A friendless, lonely outcast, dead in life."

Then he curses him, but goes on immediately to reflect how little ill his curses have as yet brought on his enemies. Ulysses, who joined the great expedition in the first instance, by constraint, flourishes; and he and the sons of Atreus mock at the misery of one who was an eager volunteer for their cause. But, though deferred, he says the curse must be accomplished, and its sight will be to his soul even as the recovery of his health.

The reply of Ulysses is characteristic. He sees that nothing can be gained by wrangling; and so he hastens to yield a real or feigned compliance with the implied request of the exile, not to be taken to Troy.

"Have then your wish" he says,

"and stay where you are. We have got your bow, and in its use Teucer is well skilled. We can take Troy without aid of yours; and perchance I shall win the honour that might have been your own." With this he departs, accompanied by the reluctant Neoptolemus; who, however, leaves some of his attendants to report to him the change of mind which he thinks that the sight of his imminent departure must produce in Philoctetes.

But no such change comes. The exile indeed bewails in heartrending accents his misery and deserted state, the rocky cavern full of sad memories and yet sadder expectations, destined henceforth to be his prison and his tomb, bereft as he now is

of the means of procuring food ; but to return to Troy in his foes' company, and for their advantage, seems to him yet worse. The Chorus have only cold comfort for him. His sorrow is self-chosen, they say ; better fortune was within his reach, yet he willed to have this evil. Then the solitary, despairing of human sympathy, cries out piteously, "O my loved bow, forced from my loving hands against thy will, if thou hast the power to feel, with what miserable looks must thou behold me condemned never more to wield thee, Heracles' bequest, and grieve to see thyself transferred to the

service of such a different master ! Come birds, and beasts that glare with wild eyes at me, ye need flee from me no longer ; I am formidable to you no more." Vainly the Chorus try afresh to persuade him, since he feels his desolate condition so keenly, to seek a refuge for it before Troy. Sooner, says Philoctetes, will he suffer the avenging thunderbolts of Jove. Turning from the kind advice which he cannot follow, to the last refuge of the forsaken, he shows a mind fully resolved to die ; and on being asked, "Wherefore ?" his accents rise from pathos to sublimity as he answers—

"My father's face to see.

Chorus. Whither ?

Phil.

Down in Hades deep ;
On him shines the sun no more.
O loved home ! O native shore !
Thy dear sight is not for me
Who, thy sacred fountains leaving,
To the Greeks, my foemen, cleaving,
Gave the help which here I weep,—
Nothing now—so great before."

But the chill as of death, which these words reveal, striking the heart of Philoctetes, proves after all to be but the coldness which comes before sunrise ; for while he is sinking to the lowest depths of hopelessness, a generous shame has been doing its work in the heart of Neoptolemus, and his better self has gained the victory. Seeing that the exile will not follow him, he finds it impossible to consum-

mate his treason by leaving him to perish ; but instead returns to restore his bow to him.

Ulysses seeks to prevent this atonement for his error, by threatening him with the anger of the army, and by insisting on his own right to the spoil obtained by his artful stratagem. But Neoptolemus, warned by him that what he is doing is foolish, replies—

"No matter, if but just ; for righteousness
Is better far than wisdom."

And ready to brave the wrath of the Greeks with justice on his side, he calls Philoctetes from his cave, listens unmoved to his fresh outburst of rage, and then, to his amazement, puts the bow into his hand. Restrained with difficulty from directing its deadly arrows against Ulysses, the injured chieftain has at least the proud delight of seeing his foe of many years flee before him. But when Neop-

tolemus—readily pardoned for his share in the deceit, and proclaimed by him, in return for such noble amends, the true son of Achilles, worthiest, as among the living, so now among the dead—tries to turn his softened heart towards Troy, he fails once more. Death still seems less hateful to Philoctetes than a return to the comrades who betrayed him. This being so, his generous young friend does not

hesitate to make his sacrifice complete, to renounce his own hopes of military glory, and to expose his dominions to the revengeful assaults of the disappointed Greeks, by conducting the exile to his home. "Let us go," he says, "since such is your resolution." And, not without emotion, the spectators see the young hope of the new generation supporting the survivor of the band of heroes of the old one; as, painfully dragging his wounded limb, he prepares to leave the scene of so many sufferings and turn his back on Troy for ever.

It is then that a voice is heard which speaks in accents greater than those of mortals, and stays their descent to the ship. The ancient owner of the bow, on which so much depends, appears to direct its destination. Arrayed in his celestial panoply, Heracles himself is revealed to the astonished pair, to promise his early friend an ending to his sorrows, glorious

in its measure like his own. The will of the gods, which he makes known to him, is that he meet Esculapius at Troy and be healed by him, slay Paris, let the Heracleian weapon subdue Ilium for the second time, and return glorious with Trojan spoil to his father's hall; there to make fit offerings from it on the pyre of Ceta. His honours are to be shared by Neoptolemus. And both alike are charged by the divine apparition to maintain due reverence to the gods whose temples stand in Troy; being assured that Zeus ever favours pious men, and that their works follow them even in death. "Voice and sight longed for through many years!" cries Philoctetes, "I cannot disobey thy words." Heracles vanishes, with the parting injunction to make haste since the wind blows fair. And Philoctetes, with pacified mind and heart reconciled to life, closes the drama by bidding a tender adieu to his lonely island:—

"As I go this land I bless:
Roof that guarded my distress,
Water-nymphs 'mid reeds that dwell,
Sea's deep thunderous bass, farewell!
With thy surge, from south wind flying,
Wetting me in cave though deep:
Hill that answered to my crying
Groan for groan from echoing steep:
O ye founts, you now I leave,
I, who thought with you to stay
Steadfast till my latest day.
Lemnos! my farewell receive,
By salt waters girdled, hail!
Speed me with a favouring gale
To the Fate-appointed place,
Friendly voices' call pursuing,
And that god's, who all-subduing,
Has wrought these things of his grace."

So the obstinate determination of Philoctetes never to return to Troy is overcome at last. His purpose, born of resentment for shameful injustice, nourished by "the unkindness of nature, symbolising to him, as to King Lear, man's unkindness and ingratitude, through long

years spent enduring the extremes of hunger, thirst, cold, heat, and unutterable pain, while ambition died within him, or rather was transformed into indignation,"¹ has grown too strong for any human hand to overthrow. Not even the son of the friend he mourns for—

¹ Campbell.

the youth in whom he sees one whose kindness can appease the long hunger of his soul for love—can soften the obduracy of a resentment which wears to its cherisher the transfigured features of a lasting protest of right against might. That resentment can only vanish before the voice of the hero-comrade of other years, now able from the heights of Olympus to set the right limits to just anger; and the glorious apparition, from whom the command that Philoctetes dare not disobey goes forth, supplies what was lacking to the close of an earlier play, the "*Trachiniæ*," by manifesting what was the true issue of that funeral pyre to which the suffering Heracles was there borne amid cries of agony. Thus the effect left by "*Philoctetes*" on the mind is wholly a sense of calm satisfaction, reflected on the spectator's from its hero's noble heart. The affections which cling, in the absence of human objects, to the voices of the sea, to the green margin of the fountains, have at length found a place of rest worthy of them in the ingenuous boy, side by side with whom the worn and tried man is to march to honour. The crafty policy of Ulysses is rebuked, the will of heaven accomplished without help from it and in spite of its failure; "the ambition of Neoptolemus is gratified without the loss of essential nobleness, and Philoctetes, after his long endurance of affliction, becomes the saviour of the host."¹ Never surely was a more impressive catastrophe produced by simpler means. The effect on an open and unspoiled mind of the trustfulness that has survived years of wrong, delineated unobtrusively and naturally in the long discourse between the two principal personages, is sufficient to

bring it about; and when Neoptolemus renounces the advantage he has won by unjust means, the audience rejoice, as the spectators of a nobler contest and a more glorious victory than any gained by his famous father before Troy.

Still, pathetic and interesting as is the "*Philoctetes*" of Sophocles, his earlier drama possesses a yet greater power to excite interest and to awaken tears. The protest of Ajax against the Greeks' injustice is even more emphatic than that of the solitary of Lemnos, as the silence of death is more eloquent than life's most strenuous accents. The sufferer, who is not wholly free from blame, endures agonies from which the innocent is exempt. The living Philoctetes, gazing upward to the demigod in the sky, is an ennobling and cheering spectacle; but memory recurs with yet greater fondness to the brave Greek seeking from death an acquittal which life could not pronounce, and withdrawing from the sun rather than let his white-haired father blush at his child's disgrace. Our sympathies go forth most freely to those who depart from us in youth; or else in their prime, having perchance achieved much, but leaving a yet greater promise unfulfilled; although no heart can be so insensible as not to enter into the feelings with which Sophocles—himself an aged lingerer from a noble generation—set himself to depict the fond regrets for the past, the unwillingness to embark afresh on the sea where his vessel had been wrecked so fatally, of the man who had seen two generations of heroes pass away before he was summoned by a strange fate to stand where they had fallen, and with worn frame and tottering limbs to do the work which was to have been their glory.

¹ Campbell.

A LADY'S RIDE ACROSS SPANISH HONDURAS.

CHAPTER I.

"ESTOY SOLTERA; VOY CON DIOS" (I am alone; I go with God).—*Spanish Axiom.*

It was the question of pounds, shillings, and pence. Should I take steamer from San Francisco to Panama, cross the isthmus, and from the Atlantic side enter Spanish Honduras? or had I better travel by steamer as far as Amapala, and thence take mules and ride across the country to San Pedro Sula—my destination—a distance of about two hundred and nineteen miles? Thus was perplexed the mind of your globe-trotting servant "Soltera," as she pored over railway and steamboat guides and calculated expenses, in her comfortable but very costly bedroom in the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, in the month of July, in year of grace 1881.

The steamer to Panama! A fine expense! and once arrived at that place, the end of the journey is not by any means reached. After enduring more or less sea-sickness, much thunder, and lightning unlimited, for about twelve days, there would be the further risk of catching the Panama fever.

This fever is often irreverently styled the canal fever (in grim compliment to that cutting), and its general result is to put a decided stop to all plans and locomotion for many a day—often for ever. Should I avoid that misfortune, there would be the certainty of being detained at some miserable place to wait for a vessel going to Puerto Cortez. A bill for "discomfort supplied," at a fearful charge of dollars, would be the inevitable result of that detention.

Arrived at Puerto Cortez, which

is also called Puerto Caballo, there would still be fifty miles to travel over mountains, through streams, and upon the ruins of the late Inter-Oceanic Railway of Honduras, till the haven of San Pedro Sula were reached. So far the one side of the question.

Now for its converse.

Take steamer as far as Amapala, which is the only Pacific port of entry to Spanish Honduras; invade the consulate thereat; make a friend and ally of good Señor Don Pedro Bahl; ask him to provide mules, servant, and muleteer; and thus ride straight and hard for San Pedro Sula. That is the better plan. It will also be the cheaper route; and I shall, by this means, enjoy the mountains I love so well, and see them in all their beauty;—the grand Honduras mountains, over which few Englishmen, and still fewer Englishwomen, have ridden!

It has been ascertained, and I have been assured of this from Honduras, that the dangers of this route have been much exaggerated, the chief drawback being the bad roads and the peril of fording some of the streams. There exists also a great difficulty in obtaining food. Well, I shall have a servant and a muleteer to forage, and I can live as they do for twelve days or so (rash asseveration); and let me only come by a tolerable supply of milk, and I will travel far and well.

Now falls on my soul the remembrance that I am alone in the world; and at this moment the

knowledge brings no pang. No one near of kin exists whose anxieties might deter me; no loving heart to be broken should my portion be evil. Suffering, physical and mental, will fall upon myself solely; and should this expedition end in the "last disaster," there remain those outside the ties of kin, thank God, who will hold me in kindly remembrance and deal gently with my name. Let me forward whilst I have health and willing spirit. I am alone in the world—yes; but I go with God.

"What are you doing, Soltera? why are you going to San Pedro Sula, and where on earth is the place?" had inquired of me, some weeks previously, my handsome young cousin of the clan Campbell, who had come on board at Auckland, whereat the steamer *Australia* touched (in which I formed one of the passengers), from lovely, hospitable Sydney. We were bound to San Francisco, and had to stay a few hours in Auckland in order to take in the New Zealand contingent of mails and seafarers. This cousin and his wife were bound "home" on a visit, and it was quite in the usual accidental nature of things in travel, that we should thus meet without the slightest provocation thereto on either side.

Rail and steam here gave evidence that the world is small enough to render chance encounters with long-parted friends a common incident.

Apart from the fact that the presence of this relative would contribute to throw an air of respectability over me, I was very glad to meet him, and to secure an auditor as to my plans and intentions.

In answer to his inquiries, I informed Mr Campbell that San Pedro Sula was a large town in

the Republic of Honduras, situate about fifty miles, or rather more, off the Atlantic coast, at the foot of a range of mountains, name forgotten. That its climate, according to a pamphlet compiled by the Rev. Dr Pope, is salubrious (it is no such thing—but the nights are bearable); that a colony of Britons and some French people were being located thereat. In addition to this, the Government of Honduras was granting large concessions of land (quite true), and doing its utmost to get Europeans to make a settlement there.

"What has all this to do with you?" cut in my cousin, who seemed to fear that the whole contents of the pamphlet were about to be let loose upon him.

"Simply this: as I speak Spanish fairly, and can be otherwise useful, I am invited (after some correspondence on the subject) to take charge of the school which is being erected for the colonists' children at San Pedro Sula. A salary has been guaranteed me; and in addition to this, the Government will assign me a plantation of one hundred and sixty acres for the taking it—subject, of course, to its being cultivated and kept in order. Dr Pope writes me that a plantation once put in working trim, requires little further outlay, beyond the first or second year's expenses."

"Who is this Dr Pope?"

"The agent of the Honduras Government and a Catholic priest. He has already located a number of families from Ireland, and he is to return shortly and fetch out four hundred more. The pamphlet is circulated as a proclamation and confirmation of his position to the outside world, and contains, both in the Spanish and the English language, a copy of all the engagements existing between the Presi-

dent of the Republic, Dr Soto, and this agent. There are also published letters of authority from most of the principal persons of the State, the Dutch consul, and the Bishop of Comayagua."

"Coma—what?"

"Comayagua," I replied, "the ancient capital of Spanish Honduras. The seat of government is transferred now to a town which lies further south of Comayagua. The name of this town is Tegucigalpa—perhaps you like that better?"

"Don't chaff a fellow; the names are wonderful! What a country it must be to stand such queer-sounding appellations! Excuse me further. Let me hope that you have not bought any land, or placed money in this agent's hands."

"Certainly not. You know that I have been obliged to increase my pittance by taking pupils in Sydney. I am very, very sorry to part with these dear people; but I am not getting younger, and I want to make a home of my own. This appointment will help me on till I do so. Don't you see?"

"Yes—well—and if it does not do, you can go back again. I don't know much about the matter, but I have always had the impression that the climate out there is rather awful—hot as fire, is it not?"

"Not among the mountains," I retorted quickly; for a shadow of suspicion must not be allowed to fall upon my beloved mountains. "The climate is unhealthy, and worse, I know, on the sea-coast and low-lying plains; but I shall be very little among these."

"Haven't they a place there called Mosquito? That sounds lively, but decidedly the reverse of pleasant, eh?"

"Mosquito, my good cousin, is another province altogether. Look at the map. You can abuse that

as much as you please. San Pedro Sula lies in the interior of the country, and is surrounded by the mountains. The only drawback of the situation is that the town has been placed at their base."

"What are these mountains called?"

"I do not know that they have any particular designation; but they form part of the chain of the principal range."

"You seem to be pretty well up in the geography of these parts at any rate, and I hope you will not be disappointed; for really, Soltera, this is an undertaking, and no mistake about it."

"Yes; and if you read in some newspaper a few months hence that a lady unknown, together with her mule, have been found at the bottom of a precipice, make up your mind that it is I. Better people can be spared; so any way I will try it. Besides, my late residence in Fiji has given me an insight both as regards tropical and plantation life. I learnt a few things when in those lovely isles of the Pacific which I hope to turn to good account." (A year previously I had been employed as a finishing governess in a planter's family in one of the islands of the Fijian group. This fact will inform the reader that I add the crime of poverty to my other detriments.)

The foregoing conversation will also explain the conflicting ways and means which exercised me during my stay at San Francisco, and why the more perilous route chimed in so readily with my purse and proclivities.

Time and the steamer *viâ* the Mexican ports of Mazatlan, San Blas, Manzanillo, and Puerto Angel, saw me on my way to the Republic Honduras, and bound for its port of entry, Amapala.

This latter place is so rarely

marked on the smaller maps, that I may mention that this town is situate on a small island in the bay of Fonseca; and that most people revile it as being a hot, dirty, and not money-making place.

Having "been and seen" the stores of the United States of American consul there, and witnessed the traffic which goes on in his well-stocked warehouse, I am much inclined to doubt the latter part of this assertion.

Public opinion, furthermore, appeared to be greatly aggrieved because the nightly lightning which always works with great vigour at Amapala has hitherto left the town intact, and this by a peculiar and persistent perversion of right and wrong. From the manner also in which some persons talked about this coast, I was led to believe that an inevitable lion was to be descried on its shores on the approach of a steamer, watching, it was implied, for the rare meat which, in the shape of a passenger, might descend upon Amapala. This lion also enjoyed the peculiarity of being reported as a "tiger," probably from the circumstance of an acclivity called "*La Montana de los Tigres*" being close to the landing-place, and whence the creature might have hailed. Before the journey had nearly ended, however, he had subsided (by description) into a mountain-leopard. Bad enough; but I never met him under any of these phases.

Acapulco is the one of the Mexican ports at which we touched on our way down the coast, of which I shall ever retain a "pleasant memory." We arrived in its lovely harbour in the early morning; and the sight of the picturesque little town, over the red roofs of which the thin veil of the mists was slowly clearing itself away, reminded me of the face of a friend determined

to wear a smile. Its situation between two irregular and projecting tongues of land, with the background gradually widening and rising towards the hills, invests it with an air of coziness, and of being, at the same time, thoroughly well protected.

A few trees, dotted about in all the beauty of unprecision, serve to relieve the whole landscape from the appearance of aridity so common to the majority of seaboard towns. Several broken rocks of peculiarly vivid colour jut out like an advanced-guard to the right of a long pier at the entrance, and upon this pier the natives, in full costume or in little costume, stand out in pleasing relief. Add to these the bright-coloured fruit and fish, lying in baskets of every shape and elegant texture, shrouded partially in grand green leaves, which of themselves suggest the idea of sheltering trees. Not overlooking, either, the delicate shell-work held up for sale in the hands of the loveliest female peasantry in the world; the wonderful flowers; the boats covered with every variety of gay awning, with the Mexican flag at their prow, dancing here and there on the liquid emerald of the sea.

Look with me, reader, in this mirror; you will then have some idea of how appears in everyday garb Acapulco.

"How lovely these Mexican girls are!" said the ship's doctor to me as we neared shore,—a party intending to spend a few hours on land whilst the good ship *Colima* took in cargo, and transacted the business which would detain her in harbour for the rest of the day. "Quite beautiful," continued the doctor, speaking to no one in particular, and keeping his eyes riveted upon a damsel who was waiting on the pier ready to pounce

down upon us, and bewitch us into buying some of her shell-work. This was a wreath of stephanotis, most artistically made in small white shells, and as tastefully mounted with green silk leaves. It was a crown for a fairy queen.

The doctor was a very young man—indeed this was, I think, his first trip as doctor on board a steamer. He had talked during the voyage from San Francisco with much contempt concerning Mexico, the Mexicans, and all their ways and works. In fact he could see nothing admirable but the United States of America, and had repudiated with great energy the imputation often made by the passengers in general, that America is only biding her time to “annex” Mexico to the States.

“Nothing of the kind,” he would asseverate; “you are all wrong; the States would not take the country as a gift. A land that requires other people to point out her means of wealth, and invites foreigners to exploit her mines and build her railroads! A lazy, good-for-nothing set of men; and as for the women——”

“Hold hard there, doctor,” had retorted a young English engineer, who had embarked at Mazatlan on his way to join a mining-camp somewhere in Guatemala. “I give you the men; but as for the women, nothing short of paradise can beat *them*. I was in Mexico last year, so I think I know something about it. I repeat, the ladies of Mexico are all lovely.”

This opinion was emphatically supported by a party of students fresh from college at San Francisco. These youths, who, in this most cosmopolitan of cities, must have seen many Mexican ladies, were unanimous in backing the engineer's assertion. This gentleman had a smattering of the Span-

ish language, and thus, with the alliance of the students, his position appeared to be impregnable; but the American doctor stood to his guns.

“Paradise, indeed! what have they to do with the place? They are too lazy to walk in even if the door were opened to them. No brains—no usefulness—can't do a thing but thrum on a guitar. One American girl is worth a hundred of them. And as for beauty,—dirty, brown skins—glaring, beady, black eyes without intelligence. No——”

“May I ask,” interrupted the engineer, politely, “*who* is the one American girl worth half a hundred of—well—hours?”

“Angels,” suggested one of the students. I think he suspected that the engineer's appellation might not be strong enough.

The deep flush on the quiet impassive face of the doctor betrayed that the conversation had taken a turn quite unlooked for by him. Happily at that moment one of the stewards, sent by his chief, came to ask for some quinine pills. So the doctor got himself away, but not before he had heard one of the company assert, —“The Americans certainly have their pretty women, like other nations; but, good Lord! ‘them have all of them voices like a peacock.’”

“Surely that is rather a sweeping assertion,” I made reply to the passenger who had ventured it.

“Not a bit of it,” he answered, with all the hardihood of thorough conviction; “that beautiful thing in woman, ‘the soft low voice,’ is utterly unknown in America. The children in the schools are taught to pitch their voices in a high key. It is part of their education. One can forgive a little of the peacock in a pretty woman; but when it comes to the plain ones, it makes

one shiver whenever they open their mouths."

"I don't know," I replied; "but somehow it does not seem to accord with our doctor's quiet gentle manner to accredit him with a fancy even for a girl with a harsh voice."

"Can't help himself," was the rejoinder; "and I know pretty clearly what I am talking about."

This finished the conversation as far as I was concerned; but I felt sure that the doctor, though out of sight, was near enough to hear these remarks. To prevent the subject coming up again, I asked a young lady of ten years of age to favour us with some music.

That performance had the effect of sending every one at once out of the saloon; and the next morning saw us invading a Mexican port, and admiring the beauty of "las Mejicanas."

In the multiplicity of his occupations by night and day (for there was an apprehension of fever breaking out) our Esculapius had entirely forgotten the guerilla warfare of the preceding evening, or he would not have so enthusiastically exclaimed, "How lovely these Mexican women are!"

Fortunately his opponent had seated himself in the second boat, and so this involuntary applause fell only on my ear and upon those of the San Franciscan students.

These were quite good-natured fellows, and their "chaff" was perfectly guileless of being personal or bitter. They, however, would have their say.

"Well done, doctor!" cried one who was called Paul by his *confrères*, and who seemed to be their leading spirit; "a confession and retraction all in one. Now look here, doctor: you must buy that wreath; and moreover, you must present it to some lady who is

not an American. Do you consent?"

"Wa-al, and what then? I will buy the wreath; and further, I can afford to say that I have been mistaken. There is great intelligence in that 'Mejicana's' eye. She is a wonderfully beautiful woman. Ask the price of the wreath and I will buy it, and present it to a lady not American."

True to his promise, the doctor, aided by the lad named Paul (who spoke English very fairly), immediately upon landing began to traffic with the Mexican girl, she, on her side, being more than willing. Let those whose sole acquaintance with shell-work is confined to the hideous productions exhibited at Brighton, Margate, and others of Britain's coasts, know that on their side of the world never have nor never can be encountered those wonderful productions of sand and glue and buried mussel which constitutes nine-tenths of what is miscalled shell-work in the above-named places.

The shells on the coast of Central America generally are exquisitely delicate, and thin to transparency. At a place called Acajutta, there is a beach so famous for its rose-coloured shells that it is commonly styled the bed of rose-leaves.

The making of these shell-flowers is a prevailing industry along the coast, and the native women, especially the Indians and the Mexicans, derive a great emolument from their sale. The art is also much practised by ladies of higher rank, and it is taught as one of the accomplishments in the convent schools. It is certain that nature gives a liberal helping-hand in the tints of rose and yellow which in these shells are remarkably natural; but a good deal

must be accorded to the delicate touch and elegant taste of those who arrange these charming bouquets.

The wreath being bought, it was not difficult to guess who was to be its recipient. Close beside me stood a young Irish lady, who, with her family, was on her way from Japan to New York *via* Aspinwall. The mother having the care of a young infant, had asked me to chaperon "Beauty" and her sister on this little expedition. At this moment I forget the lady's Christian name. She was called Beauty O'H—— all over the ship; and she deserved the appellation, being a simple innocent girl, charming in every way.

Three cheers from the lads, interlarded with the complimentary expressions of "Good comrade—man of good heart—of honour," &c., notified the extreme satisfaction of the students at this assignment of the purchase; whilst the sapphire blue eyes of the girl beamed with gratitude as she warmly tendered her thanks. The doctor really at that moment did receive the reward of virtue—that is, if virtue ever does get any reward outside of tracts and little books.

A fellow-passenger, who rejoiced in the name of Cookes, here remarked that he liked sentiment and all that sort of thing in its place. He had come to Acapulco to see the peak of distant Popocatepetl, "that splendid mountain, madam," he continued, particularly addressing himself to me, "which has his head covered with clouds all the year round, and which——"

Here interposed Señor Hernandez, a gentle well-bred Spaniard, who might pass for being perfectly sane, did he not acknowledge to the ambition of becoming at no distant date president of one of the Central American republics.

The Señor's knowledge of English was limited, but he had understood enough to understand that Popocatepetl was being misrepresented. "Pardon me, his head is not always in the clouds," said he, taking up Mr Cookes; "and if we want to see him in all his glory we must walk a short way into the country. In such splendid weather, I think we should be able to count upon a very clear view."

"Do you know the way?" inquired Mr Cookes, who spoke the Castilian language remarkably well.

"I was here many years ago, but I think I can remember the route; there is no time to lose. Remember our captain's words as we left: 'If you do not return by five o'clock I shall not wait, but sail away.'"

This admonition put us on our mettle, and taking the middle of the road, we set out on our expedition. The streets of Acapulco as they recede from the shore are hilly, and full of sand and large holes. An attempt has formerly been made to repair them here and there, but the result is not a success. Some of the houses are very solidly built, with stone pillars supporting the porticoes, and with broad stone seats, firmly built in the wall, within these. Apparently there was not a glass window in the place, all these apertures being filled with light lattice-work, painted a dull red colour. In some casements thin bars of iron, placed diagonally, admitted air and light.

The public school window was so furnished, and a thick shutter hung outside, which could be closed at pleasure, according to the strength of the sun and glare. The school-room seemed to be very roomy and clean, and its walls were evidently of great thickness. We looked through the iron lattice, and saw the scholars busy at work. The

master came forward and bowed, and at a sign from him all the pupils who were seated rose to their feet. This, from all appearance, did not seem to be the first time that the school had been noticed by strangers. A few little fellows poked their heads through

the lower bars; and some big ones, who had got into the street, followed us for a short distance as we wended on our way. They soon turned back, and sped away to school again with the speed of deer. Somebody was awaiting them!

CHAPTER II.

Forward being the word, we quickly cleared the town of Acapulco. Its outskirts bear a cultivated appearance, owing to the rows of trees which are planted for some distance at the side of the footpath. At this season they bore a bunchy mauve-coloured flower, something between the lilac and the Devonshire climber "*West-eria*;" but the blossom was not so clearly defined, and it crumbled away in the hand at the slightest touch.

It was pleasant to find the China rose (with such a lovely pink on its cheek) peeping out here and there from a dilapidated hedge. This place must surely be some deserted garden. A look through a gap confirmed this conjecture, as we descried several tall hollyhock-looking plants, bearing about them a decided air of culture. They appeared as if they were on guard, distracting by their gaudy array the attention of the passers-by from the desolation within.

A party endowed with plenty of life and *tongue* generally travels quickly, and gets over a good span of ground and time at almost imperceptible speed. This was certainly the case with us, as on and on we went, admiring the fantastic peaks and heights by which the near distance was intersected, and grumbling a little when the ascent became more abrupt, and the road rougher. Very shortly granite

rocks, and their usual companion the dwarf cactus, stand out upon the scene; the huts, too, had become more sparse—these were little else than bare poles, with their roofing composed of dirty skins and palm-leaves. Then utter desolation: for nothing living, save a large hare, which darted into some brushwood in the background, gave evidence that any created thing existed here.

My surprise was great when I heard this animal declared to be a hare. "It was so large and black," objected I.

"Years ago, when I landed from a merchant vessel here for a day, this place was overrun by hares. I remember we made a party to go into the interior and shoot them. They were mostly large, and the flesh was very coarse," made answer Mr Cookes.

"You have been here before?" inquired Beauty O'H—.

"I have been almost all over Mexico and the coast," returned Mr Cookes; "but I was only on shore at Acapulco for the one day I allude to, and that was twenty years ago."

"This is how you come to speak Spanish so well," said the same young lady.

"Yes—I kept it up in Mexico; but I learned the language in Spain, in the old country. When very young I was sent into a counting-house at Cadiz; but I

soon tired of that, and turned sailor."

"You know all about Popocatepetl then?" continued Beauty.

"No; I don't feel interested in mountains—I have seen such a lot of them. This one is the highest in America, they say; but it is only, after all, a volcano out of work."

"Doctor," said she, turning round, and speaking to him with an air of confidence; "you know something about this mountain. Why is it thought so much of, and where did it get its frightful name?"

"It got its frightful name in very far off times," replied that gentleman; "I cannot tell you when, but it was so called when the Spaniards invaded Mexico, and conquered that country. The meaning of Popocatepetl is 'The hill that smokes.'"

"It does not smoke now?"

"No; but at the time of the invasion I allude to, it was in full play; and the eruption was so terrific, and lasted so long, that the Indians believed it to be the portent of the destruction of their city. You should read 'The Conquest of Mexico,' by Prescott. You will learn all about it far better in that work than from me."

"Prescott is an American?"

"Yes," returned the doctor, proudly; "and his writings are accepted as being standard works in all the civilised world. If you prefer to select an English author on the subject, read Robertson."

"Certainly not," replied the girl hastily; "you Americans are so touchy. I only inquired what Prescott's nationality was, to satisfy my own ignorance."

"Come up here, all of you," shouted a voice from the front—the owner being perched on an elevated ridge a little to the right,

and taking advantage of the height to look down upon us with the air of a discoverer. This was the student Paul.

We hastened to obey. The other students helped up the girls, the Spaniard helped me, and I hauled Mr Cookes, who was lame, with my disengaged hand, the doctor propelling him in the rear.

Hats off, shouting, and an improvised war-dance on the part of the students, announced us to be in the presence of Popocatepetl,—that is, as far as eyesight was concerned. Actually it was many, many leagues away—in the far distance.

In the far distance—true; but well did we discern this magnificent peak, shooting like a monolith straight and fair into the clouds. Was his form irregular; had he gaping wounds, black with cinder and burn, and disfigured by smoke? The rich soft mantle of snow veiled all these; and troops of smaller cones far and wide, more sober in their greyer tones, clustered around him to conceal his scars and his power for evil. From the point whence we viewed him, he was the giant grand and beautiful, and we ignored the destructions which he had wrought.

"Let him not arouse," pray we; for should His hand unloose him, who can tell what miseries the pent-up fires of a century may rain on the earth?

Some longing, lingering looks, and we descend into the road which will take us back to the town! Our tongues are free, for the weird solemn scene had subdued the youngest of us into silence.

Now we all burst forth into praise, and admire ourselves intensely for undertaking this pilgrimage. Ere long it leaks out that some of us are tired, and all confess to feeling very hungry and thirsty.

Good Señor Hernandez is equal to this occasion.

"I have an old friend," said he, "whose *hacienda* is very near the town,—it will not be many steps out of the way. If he does not happen to be at home, some of the family will be. They are kind, hospitable people, and will make us welcome."

"But we are such a gang," one of our number reminded Señor Hernandez.

"Never mind; there is plenty of room, and my friend is a Spaniard of pure race." This last expression meant many things; amongst which the declaration of there being no admixture of Indian blood in the composition of Señor Hernandez's friend was one; the other, that a true Spaniard never quarrels with the number of his guests.

So we hied to the *hacienda* of Señor Don Candido, and were admitted through a broken gate into a piece of ground, half coffee plantation, half garden, and whole wilderness,—brilliant flowers dotting themselves here and there, mostly set on tall stalks: they reminded me somewhat of some pert damsels I have seen, who were determined not to be overlooked.

A long low building stood in the centre of this enclosure; and presently there poured out from this men, women, dogs, unlimited in number as they appeared, followed by a very handsome lad who carried a gun in his hand. Introductions over, we were soon seated in the broad verandah—which is generally the place of social gatherings in these Spanish houses. Some handsomely netted hammocks and some plain grass ones were slung between the several posts of the verandah. Out of one of these a head was raised up, and as quickly popped back again.

"It is only Pepita," said the

lady of the house, in explanation. "Poor Pepita! she runs about too much. Sleep on," she continued, addressing the bulge in the hammock; "these good friends will excuse thee." And she gave the hammock a swing, which, I suppose, sent Pepita off to the land of Nod, but which effectually roused a cross parrot which had been reposing with its mistress, and which flew out of its enclosure, and without the slightest provocation made straight for me and attempted to bite my feet. Failing in this, the bird clung to my skirts, and attempted to climb upon me beneath them. I tried to push the creature away, but it seemed bent upon tasting European flesh; and as the O'H—girls were afraid to touch it, I had to rise to my feet and hurl it from me. Just then the handsome lad—who was called, I heard, Jaime (this is pronounced Ha-ee-may, and is Castilian for our ugly, abrupt James)—caught sight of what was going on, and proceeded to put a stop to the parrot's annoyance, for it was rushing at me again. Don Jaime left the verandah-post against which he had been leaning as he chatted to Señor Hernandez, and brought out from some corner a long and very thin bamboo switch. With this he administered four or five cuts sharply across the back and wings of the bird, reproving it as he did so just as if it had been a child under correction.

"Ah, naughty Marquita! take thy whipping; this is to teach thee manners. Wicked bird! how dare you try to bite!"

I had never seen a bird whipped before; and fearing that he might do it a mischief, I begged the lad to refrain.

"She must be tamed," replied the lad, as he desisted at once; "she is of a very strong kind, and

her temper is that of the *demonio*. No, I would not hurt her ; I know how much to correct her."

All this time the bird was yelling and squeaking like a veritable *demonio*, and flew to the roof of the verandah, describing wide circles about Don Jaime's head, and making as if she would attack him with all the strength of her will. The bamboo switch was evidently a factor in the case ; and at length she flew up into a corner and contented herself with emitting now and then some peculiar sounds, which possibly might be hard bird-swearing.

The party at the other end of the verandah talked calmly on, and never appeared even to notice the hubbub which this had occasioned. I suppose in these parts it is not the correct thing to expend unnecessary strength upon being surprised.

Some excellent coffee and fruit were handed to us, and at the same time cigars were offered to all who would accept them. The lady of the house presented her own to me—first lighting it and giving it two or three puffs at her mouth as she did so. This is the most complimentary manner of presenting a cigar, and I felt sorry that natural and national prejudices obliged me to decline the civility. The hostess soon found a grateful recipient in one of our fellow-travellers, and then she and her daughters smoked away as hard as any three London cabmen.

The Misses O'H—— proposed to stroll out into the garden, and the handsome Jaime put down his coffee-cup and attended us. He plucked some fine China roses, and placing these against a background of coffee-tree stems laden with berries, produced three beautiful and unique bouquets. This young gentleman told us that he was a

nephew of the owner of the house, and that he was paying a visit at this time to Acapulco. We were all very much taken with the appearance of the youth, and his kind unaffected manner was truly charming.

"What a lout the ordinary British youth of the same age would be in this position !" said the eldest Miss O'H—— to me, as we walked behind the others. "He would be wishing all of us in Japan, and suffer the extreme of misery in his own mind."

"True," I answered ; "but remember, when the ordinary British lad arrives at maturity, he generally remains in the plenitude of strength and manhood for many years. When Lubin is fifty, Antonio will be looking, and probably feeling, sixty-five. The Spanish women, you know, are considered to be old at thirty ; but they are formed and lovely at fifteen."

"I do not understand why this should be," continued my young friend.

"Nor I either. I suppose it is in some degree a fulfilment of the doctrine of compensation."

"Ah ! that is my father's favourite theory, don't you know ?"

"No, dear Hibernia, I did not know ; but I agree with your father. I confess to being a great believer in the doctrine of compensation."

"Have you had any compensation in your life for your early troubles ? None of us have, and papa has been done out of a lot of money," said the girl.

"So have I also ; but compensation may not come in the way we expect. Good health, happiness, getting married, my dear, on your part, and not getting married on mine, may perhaps be a compensation for the loss of money."

So preached I ; and the kind-

hearted girl pressed my arm, and said she only wished that I had a large fortune, and that I could finish my journey with her and her family. This could not be, for the O'H——'s were on their way to New York.

Now were gathered together our forces, for we must be back on our way to the vessel. The doctor was missing. Somebody surmised that he had already returned to the ship. However, we unanimously decided that he would turn up somewhere; and then we all took leave, having well enjoyed our simple and cordial entertainment.

"Ah! there you are, doctor; we could not think what had become of you," exclaimed Mr Cookes, as he caught sight of that gentleman sitting on a step busy overhauling the contents of a candle-box-looking article. "We thought you had turned back for metal more attractive — the Mexican shell-worker."

"You thought wrong, then. I strayed out of the way to look for some marine plants, for I aspire to be a little of a botanist. Not having the faintest idea where you had got to, I walked straight here; for you would be obliged to pass this place to get to the pier."

"This place" was a large and well-stocked store, hung without and within with a wonderful collection of articles, and kept by a veritable Englishman. I wanted some large white handkerchiefs wherewith to cover my shoulders during my proposed ride—as the back of the neck, at the juncture of the head with the spine, is the part which should be more carefully covered even than the head itself under a burning sun.

The girls, too, wanted the gayest handkerchiefs they could find, to remind them of Mexico when they arrived at home.

We were supplied with what we required at a terrific price. The shopkeeper must have netted forty per cent on an average upon our purchases.

"We pay very high for the privilege of dealing with a countryman," remarked Mr Cookes. "The French, Greeks, and Spaniards certainly do bleed foreigners pretty freely, but it is reserved to the English all over the world to overcharge and swindle those of their own nation. Other peoples are considerate to their own, but we are above the weakness of making any exception."

"Really?"

"That is my experience in these countries. Depend upon it, the worst people to be encountered in any part of the world are the low whites," went on Mr Cookes. "They get all they can out of the natives, and then, in some cases, go home and cant about the wickedness of the heathen."

This is in a measure true, as I knew by experience in the Fiji Islands, and from statements of friends on whom I could rely.

Returning in the boat to the vessel, I found myself again seated near the doctor. He asked me to spare him a stem of the coffee-berries.

"I want them," said he, with a little hesitation, "for a 'school marm.' She is a good girl, and, though an American, she *has* the low soft voice so beautiful in woman." Here the doctor looked very valiant, as if he would not recede an inch from what he had averred.

I handed him the stem of coffee-berries, and with it the finest of my roses. "The 'school marm' will be the doctor's wife some fine day, I predict," said I, shaking him by the hand. "Now, do you dry that rose, and some far-off time you

may chance upon it, and remember our little excursion in Acapulco."

The good gentleman returned the pressure of my hand, and merely replied, "Yes; this has been a red-letter day."

"May all go well with you. Good-bye."

The boat had touched the ship's stair, and the doctor, after placing me on the lower step, ran rapidly up on deck. Thus vanished out of my sight, probably for ever, one of my pleasant travelling friends.

The captain was standing on board as we ascended. "I have not had time to say much to you," said he, addressing me; "but I hear you are going to the Honduras. Surely it is a terrible journey for you to take alone!"

"I do not fear a little hardship," said I, perhaps too confidently. "I am the daughter and sister of English soldiers, and my bringing up has never been luxurious. Circumstances in later years have compelled me to depend on myself."

"It is a wonder to me," continued the captain, "that your relatives allow you to go."

"I have no near relations, and I go to make a home of my own. We have all of us our troubles, captain; do not discourage me. Hitherto I have got on very well, and the world in general is kind to lone female travellers."

"Yes, the civilised world." The captain here shook his head.

I turned aside to answer a summons. The speaker was a bedroom steward. "Mr Smith sends me to ask you to get together your things, please, for the boat will be ready in twenty minutes to take you on board the Clyde."

I looked at my roses and my beautiful bunch of coffee-berries, and handed them silently over to the youngest Miss O'H——; for—the truth must out—I was to say

good-bye, and leave these friends of a few days "for ever and a day," as the saying goes. Yes; there stood the vessel alongside of the Colima,—the steamer which we had seen in the harbour before we went ashore. She was called the Clyde, was smaller than the Colima, and warranted slow.

This vessel had been all day taking in and discharging cargo, and now was ready to receive the last of the passengers of the Colima who might be bound to the intermediate ports. The future mission of the Colima was to dash down to Panama without a stoppage; whilst the Clyde was to dawdle leisurely along the coast, stop at every port, and to cast anchor every night from sundown to sunrise.

"Why is this?" I inquired of Mr Smith, the head steward,—that kindest and most courteous of head stewards, wherever the others may be.

"The navigation is particularly dangerous along that coast, and in some places the water is very shallow and abounds in shoals. The steamers always lay-to at night. The voyage down there will be very tedious, and the heat terrible, you'll find," returned Mr Smith. "Do not be startled at the lighting. It is very alarming to a stranger, but you will soon be accustomed to that. This is the season for it."

"We have had a pretty fair share since we left San Francisco. Will it be worse as we go further south?" I inquired.

"No; but you will think more of it, as you will be lying still, and the steamer also. I mention the subject, to assure you that I have never heard of any vessel being struck; and although moving objects, they say, run less risk, the lightning on this coast seems to respect vessels at anchor."

"Are any more of our passengers changing for the Clyde?" I inquired.

"One steerage passenger, — a gentleman in every sense of the word. He goes only as far as La Union, but he is willing to be useful to you if he can. I am sorry to say that terrible 'lady,' Mrs C., and her children, will be your only companions. I transferred them to the other ship three hours ago, and they have been shrieking ever since. By the way," continued Mr Smith, with his good-natured laugh, "the captain of the Clyde is in a terrible fright as to what you may be like, as these C.'s are the only specimens he has of the Colima's passengers, and Mrs C. talks of her friend the English lady!"

I had only spoken to this individual once. She was a demi-semi-gentlewoman, and her manners and appearance were very unfortunate. Her hardness to one of her children, and the brazen way in which she had informed the passengers in general that she had come away in debt, and evaded her tradespeople in San Francisco, had caused us to dislike her thoroughly.

We found that her husband was captain of a mine somewhere on the coast of Guatemala, and that she and her family were on the way to join him. According to her own account, she had left San Francisco in disguise; but from various discrepancies in her narrations, I was led to think that she preferred being taken for a vagabond than to pass as one of whom there was nothing particular to be said.

Well, here was the boat and Mr Smith waiting to transfer me to the Clyde. He brings in his hand a glass of champagne, which is sent, he says, "with the Colima's compliments." The O'H——'s and students say good-bye with all the kindness of their nature; and gentle, unassuming Señor Hernandez tells me not to keep him waiting, for he is coming on board with me to introduce me to the captain. And so I get away, with a benison in my heart on these kindly strangers. This was all my adieu, for I could not speak. *El buen Dios los guarde muchos años!* (May God grant them many years!)

CHAPTER III.

The steerage passenger described by the head steward as being a thorough gentleman was already seated in the boat which was to convey us on board the Clyde. I saw at a glance that he was one of Britannia's sons — very poor, perhaps, but bearing withal that unmistakable air of "breed," which neither wealth, nor education even, has ever succeeded in imitating with success. The true stamp of nature's gentleman, the best of all, is ever inborn. This fellow-wanderer assisted us to seats, and then we exchanged a

few words as we were being rowed to our new vessel. I gathered from these that this passenger was bound for the mines in Guatemala; and he added to this information an avowal of his determination never to set foot in England until he should return rich, or at least independent.

"I am going to work as a common miner," continued this young man, with great decision, "whether my family like it or not. They sent me off to make my way as best I could in the colonies; and because I could not get a situation

as a clerk in an office the moment I landed, it is assumed that I am idle and all the rest of it; and so I am going to take my own way of it, and stick to the work that has been offered to me on this side."

Mr Smith, who sat opposite, listened to all this, and then said: "You came from Sydney, sir, did you not?"

"Yes; I worked my passage to Frisco, and am now on my way to join a mining camp."

From what transpired further, I found that this young man was but one of the many who suffer from the extraordinary delusions under which many *patres familiarum*, uncles, and widowed mothers of our nation labour with regard to the demand and supply of educated labour in the colonies. Generally speaking, when a young gentleman betrays, or has betrayed a proclivity for spending too much money, or cannot get what is called *genteel* employment at home, or has perhaps committed himself in an act of grave misdoing, there is always some fool at hand to suggest his being sent out to the colonies. If he may consent to enter farm or domestic service, to learn a trade, or undertake any manual labour—well, let him go. "But no," says *paterfamilias*; "Dick has had a good education, he must go out as a gentleman. What he has learned in the office here will suffice to place him at once; and Crammer, the emigration agent, assures me that young men are sure to be provided for at once in the colonies." And so, with perhaps one respectable introduction, and much oftener without any, young hopeful or hopeless is sent on his way. He perhaps makes some inquiries on his journey, and falls in generally with those who note only the successes.

"Look how well have succeeded

MacWuskey and O'Scamp! and they landed in the colony without a pound, sir!"

Very true of forty years ago; but now are changed days, and the field, in the older towns at least, is full; besides, the sons of the colonists must have their innings.

Thus it is, that when Dick and Tom Clerk, London, first arrive in Sydney, for instance, they walk, poor fellows, day after day, from office to wharf, and from wharf to store counting-house, seeking work in all honesty, and finding none. In some instances they get promises, but in general they are recommended to betake themselves to the bush; and in some few cases they are roughly repelled, and requested not to bother. Desperation, as they find their small means diminishing, leads them to invade the offices of the governor, the inspector of police, and the immigration agent. Each and every one of these would do his best to help, but he has already a list of applicants as long as his arm. The answer to inquiries for employment is invariably the same. "You must wait. I will try and help you, if you can stay for a month or so; if not, I advise you to go into the bush as soon as you can."

There it is; Clerk, London, cannot wait. He was sent out with a very small sum, and most of this is already spent for everyday wants. He would go into the bush now, but he cannot command the railway fare.

In nine cases out of ten, the family of the clerk has never supplied one shilling to enable him to exist until work is found. So deeply rooted is the idea that a man can get into a merchant's office (this is the favourite vision) the moment almost that he lands in Australia, that provision for a

month in advance is seldom thought of. And so the family feel very aggrieved when they get the intelligence that Dick is hauling coals on a wharf, and that Tom is driving cattle at Tumberumba.

Ah! how often comes the news that the one is dying in hospital, dependent upon the benevolence of a citizen and a sister of mercy; and that the other, not finding employment, has disappeared, no one knows whither!

Our boat is dancing attendance now, for we have to wait till a *barca* from the shore, unlading fruit, sheers aside. This conversation is Greek to Señor Hernandez, but he smiles good-naturedly, and tells the young man that a great deal can be done in mines. This much the Señor has gathered.

Mr Smith here asked if the mounted police of Sydney were not a very efficient body of men?

"Very," I replied; "the force is chiefly constituted of young men who have originally emigrated with the intention of filling very different positions. They are well off, for the inspector of police takes great interest in those who buckle cheerfully to their work, and he always employs a fit man when he can. The mounted police, however, has its limits, and cannot be regarded as a refuge for the destitute. I strongly advise every man who emigrates to the colonies to learn a trade, or follow some manual labour. Clerks and school teachers abound there *ad nauseam*, and it is neither wise nor honest to advise one to add to the number."

"You are quite right," answered the steerage passenger. "I suppose you have had some experience in the matter."

"The sad experience of being applied to by more than one gentleman's son to lend him a few shil-

lings wherewith to purchase a meal."

"This must be very often the result of their own imprudence," said Mr Smith.

"In some cases, unfortunately; but bad management and ignorance on the part of people at home has a good deal to do with it. If the lad is not to be trusted with money, why cannot parents or guardians send it out to some bank or responsible person? This, I am told, has been urged both publicly and privately. You know as well as I do that banishment to the colonies has been a favourite remedy for ne'er-do-weels at home. Happily the colonies will no longer put up with our scapegraces and incapables; but work cannot, at first, be got for even the most deserving."

Space is now made for us, and we clamber up the iron steps of the Clyde. Mr Smith has something to say to his *confrère* in that vessel. I hear later on that it is an injunction to take care of me. A Chinaman comes to tell me that my baggage is in the cabin No. 2, which I am to occupy alone. This last news is very pleasant, and I am comforted also when I see that No. 2 is a deck cabin, and that the berth is furnished with white curtains. This will enable me to keep the door open during the night. Mrs C. and her children are to occupy No. 1, so there will be just companionship enough without too near proximity.

The sunset is over, and Señor Hernandez and I sit on a bench and watch the lightning. It has become quite a familiar object now; and we both admired this wonderful feature of the nights on this coast with deep interest. We talk about Old Spain, I remember, and my good friend is delighted to

find that I am the daughter of an officer who fought for that country in the last Peninsular war. Now Mr Smith comes to say good-bye, and to carry away this kindly gentleman. The parting is quickly over, and I plunge into my cabin and become "Soltera" once more.

Four o'clock A.M. is the correct hour for rising at sea in Central America. After a night of great heat, I had just fallen asleep as the vessel moved out of port; ten minutes afterwards I was roused by a succession of shrieks. The cause proved to be Mrs C. correcting one of her children with a box-strap; and so my intention of remaining in my berth was completely frustrated, as far as sleep was concerned, for, to drown the child's yells, the elder sister had commenced a series of dismal tunes on an accordion. Sam the Chinaman, who had brought me a cup of tea, was dreadfully scandalised.

"Very bad lot," remarked the Celestial, as he handed in my tea through the window which looked out on to the deck. "Ole gentlemen other side, he swear awful at the noise, and me don't wonder. Ay! wait till captain come on deck, he soon see. Come again soon." This last promise was in reference to bringing me more tea, I suppose; for my friend had shot away like an arrow at the sound of a voice which was inquiring for that "heathen Sam" in anything but dulcet tones.

There were few passengers present at the usual hour of breakfast, and of these I alone represented womankind. What were called *gentlemen* were anything but attractive specimens of their order. They all ate and drank in silence, fed with their knives, and never had the civility to pass a single thing on the table to me. They certainly knew what was the busi-

ness of the table-steward, and, I conclude, did not care to interfere with it. The captain, of whom I had heard most favourable report, was ill, and confined to his cabin.

Here was one of the varieties of travel with a vengeance; but we cannot have everything *couleur de rose*; and as no company is better than uncongenial company, I tucked myself into a shady corner on deck, nursed the purser's cat, and read Jules Verne's 'Twenty Leagues under the Sea.' If anything distracted my attention, it was the remembrance of the Colima and her seafarers; but the copy-book slips of my early days impressed upon me that comparisons are odious; and so I tried very hard to put everything but the present out of my mind, and in a sort of way I managed to succeed.

A day and a night certified each other with regular monotony, the heat becoming more intense. At length we made Port Angel. The port presents a fine bold coast, but it bears the reputation of being extremely unhealthy. An enormous old lady of colour got in here: it was quite a work of mechanism to get her hoisted up the side. This was the first and last I ever saw of her, as she went straight to her cabin, and remained there till I disembarked at Amapala. She was accompanied by a nephew, who seemed to be very nervous and shy; so these were no great acquisition.

A laughable mistake had caused me to be sick and qualmish on this day. Mrs C., who treated me very civilly, asked me to divide a bottle of congress-water with her, both of us looking upon it as a kind of effervescent, such as lemonade or soda-water.

The Chinaman who had brought it up of course made no explanation. Mrs C. divided the contents

of the bottle into two glasses, and we both drank off a good portion of the most abominable decoction I ever tasted, at a gulp. Simultaneously, we put down the glasses, and glared at each other.

"What have you given me?" I at last gasped out.

"It's poison! I am sure it's poison!" shrieked Mrs C. "Sam, —Chinese fool, come to me this minute! You have brought poison here!"

Sam was not within hail; but one of the hitherto dumb male passengers was passing, and he was startled into opening his lips.

"Why — you have not been drinking this to quench your thirst, have you?" said he, as he took up a glass.

"Yes; we thought it was a cooling drink."

The man could not restrain a laugh—who could? This beverage was a strong medicine—diluted Epsom salts, and something more—and ranked among the ship's remedies for bilious attacks and other ailments. We had taken enough for four people, and we naturally must expect to feel the effects of the medicine severely.

"If you had wanted to ward off fever, you could not have managed it more effectually," continued our interlocutor. "Let me advise you to eat something substantial, and avoid tea and soups for a day or two." So saying he turned on his heel, and we had the satisfaction of hearing him laugh like a fiend as he went down to the saloon.

Mrs C. hurled the congress-water bottle into the sea, and sent for some brandy. We took about a teaspoonful apiece, and were not, after all, made very ill. Possibly the dose was good for us; but we both, I think, will "squirm" to the end of our lives at the mention of congress-water.

The next day being the "glorious Fourth of July," some recognition of the event must take place. Early in the morning, the C. girls' awful accordion was in full play, the purser following suit upon another, till we were nearly all made wild with the noise; for the music had been supplemented by a fire of crackers, and human yells were added to these.

Happily the captain, though an American, did not appreciate this manner of celebrating the national glorification day. He was possessed of great taste and refinement; and he would do a thing well, or leave it alone; so these rejoicings were put an end to, and a very good dinner was served in the saloon in honour of the day. Captain C. was a remarkably handsome and agreeable man; and I always look back upon him as being my model American. Of course there are many such, but I have not, hitherto, been fortunate enough to meet them.

Three days passed wearily away, as the heat in the day had become most oppressive: it was a dull, sickly kind of heat, which seemed to permeate through the system and absorb all strength. The sea-air, and a violent thunderstorm which took place one night, kept us alive.

We stopped at one or two ports; passengers coming and going by units, and twos and threes, as the case might be. The C. children became so unmanageable as the days went by, that I really could not help feeling some compassion for the mother. To keep these rioters a little quiet, the officers of the ship supplied them with oranges, nuts, and other fruit, in unlimited quantity. The heaps of peel, skins, and other *débris* at our cabin-doors testified to the justice done to these refreshments, and Sam the China-

man had to come and sweep "twice a-day," as if he were cleaning up after a herd of swine. This extra office, it may be supposed, did not tend to increase his admiration for the family.

It was a great incident in our career when we reached a small port, the name of which is not in my journal, to see a boat come off shore, bringing towards us two passengers, some bales, and a heap of cocoa-nuts. These last were the special attraction, for nothing quenches the thirst more quickly than the water which is contained in the cocoa-nut before it turns to milk and kernel. The ship's store of cocoa-nuts was exhausted; and we were not only thankful to see a new supply, but hugged ourselves in the opinion that they might be fresh.

An unlocking of the door of an unoccupied cabin on the other side of mine announced that we were going to have a new neighbour. Sam informed us that a gentleman was going to occupy it who was sick, "very muchee sick. He waitee in boat now—got own servant; he waitee for more mans pull him up side."

Mrs C. became violently excited at this piece of news. "Very ill, is he?" exclaimed she. "Speak the truth, Sam, he has got the fever—you know he has. Don't contradict me; it *can* be nothing else than fever."

"No, not anything like that, missee," returned the patient Celestial. "Him have fever? No, no; captain know better; captain no let fever in here, eh!"

There was some reason in this; and though Mrs C. had replied, "Then it will turn to fever," my fears were instantly allayed. I remembered how strict were all precautions taken on board against even a suspicion of "El Vomito,"

as is called the terrible yellow fever of these coasts. A family of five children, however, fully justified Mrs C.'s alarm.

Presently a scuffling and shuffling of feet approached our quarters, and on standing aside we gave place to an exceedingly large stout gentleman who was leaning on the arm of his servant. Behind these came a sailor with a portmanteau and a canvas sack, tied in the middle like a mail-bag, *minus* its seal. Sam darted to the front in order to show the cabin.

The gentleman was a Briton without a doubt. He was dressed in a suit of white linen, and a long pug-aree dangled from his green hat. His face was ghastly pale, and his head was laid on his servant's shoulder. He evidently was suffering greatly, and appeared to be almost insensible. As I looked at him it occurred to me that he might have had a sunstroke.

The servant got his master into his cabin, and presently one of the ship's officers came to assist in getting this stout gentleman into his berth. The servant, who was a *ladino* (mixture of Spanish and Indian), was but a lad, of at most seventeen years, and must have been quite unable to deal single-handed with so inert a load.

During dinner Captain C. told me something about this new passenger. "He is travelling," said he, "for a firm at New York, and, like most men down here, he is looking after mines."

"He seems to be very ill," I said.

"Oh, that will pass off during the night. He is merely suffering from giddiness from exposure to the sun, and from getting into an awful rage to boot. Just fancy! he stood in the boiling heat for about two hours disputing a charge on his baggage! The custom-house officer

came on board with him to explain how he appears to be so ill. It's a mercy that he escaped a sun-stroke. Will you take some curry? it is very good."

I got the curry, and the captain went on. "And only about two pesetas" (less than two shillings)! "This is just like the usual run of Englishmen; they will bear an overcharge of pounds with fair equanimity, but when the matter is one of sumpence, they swear and tear till they have scarcely a breath left!"

"Two pesetas seem hardly worth while to dispute about," said I.

"The principle of the thing is always the reason given when the sum is a trifle—and it is so: but it is lost labour to rave at these people; they do not understand, as a rule, one quarter of what is said to them. I have seen men stand whilst a foreigner, an opponent, is telling them, in the strongest of mixed idioms, that they are fools and villains,—quietly stand, with a half-pitying smile on their faces, as if they were disputing with a child, and must make allowance."

"But if they don't understand?"

"It would be much the same if they did. They know well enough that they are being abused, and bow and flourish between the lulls in the conversation in the calmest manner. That is so aggravating to the English and Americans! These take it as meant for impertinence; I, who have had experience, know that it results from pure indifference, and the languor induced by the climate."

"I have been told that these Central Americans stick very closely to the point where money is concerned," said I.

"That they do. Our friend upstairs had, after all, to pay the two pesetas, or leave his baggage behind.

And so, what with the excitement and exposure, he nearly succeeded in bringing on a fit. However, the physicking he has had will set him up all right by to-morrow."

This was cheering news, and Mrs C. retired to rest with a peaceful mind.

On the morrow the stranger was reclining in a bamboo-cane chair beneath the awning. He did not look quite well, but his appearance was certainly more comfortable than that presented on the preceding day.

I bade him "good morning," and inquired after his health. Mr Z.'s fine grey eyes lighted up as I addressed him.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "I could not be mistaken; I was sure that you were an Englishwoman!"

I confirmed his opinion.

"You are not belonging to that woman and those horrible children?" he continued, speaking with much disgust, and indicating the C. party with his thumb.

"No; I am only acquainted with them by the accident of travel."

"Excuse me, I am a plain man; what on earth brings a lady such as you in this part of the world?"

I told him, as briefly as I could, what my position was. He snorted and grunted, and finally said—

"I hope you won't get murdered. By the by, San Pedro Sula, that is not a bad place when you get to it; I should very much like to go there myself, but the travelling——"

The *ladino* boy, with a polite "Con permiso," stated that he had been at San Pedro Sula. It was "a beautiful place," he said.

"He was there," continued the master, "helping to build that confounded railway. There's a mess! A lot of rascals in London set that floating. It ought to

have paid ; yes, paid well ; but in these places there is no one to look after things, and the whites are quite as ready to swindle one another when there is nothing to be got out of foreigners. Would you believe it, ma'am," continued the poor gentleman, "that a wretched Scotchman, one of my own countrymen, actually upheld the custom-house clerk, through thick and thin, in the matter of an overcharge which was made on my baggage !"

I expressed my regret to hear this, but ventured the observation that perhaps the Scotchman thought that the official was right.

"Nothing of the kind," replied my friend with great energy, "he only wanted to curry favour and stick to his berth. Fancy their having the audacity to charge me wharfage dues for that bag of cocoa-nuts there !" continued Mr Z., warming with his subject ; "a few cocoa-nuts that I had bought and sent down the night before only ! The thing is monstrous ! I could have done without the fruit, as I am going to *La Libertad* only ; but they threatened to detain my portmanteau if I did not pay all the dues. So I was obliged to pay two pesetas, as I had not time to waste. They got a bit of my mind, though !"

Here we both laughed ; and as Mr Z. was in the main a good-natured person, his wrath quickly evaporated in the safety-valve, which I, as an unprejudiced listener, seemed to represent.

"*La Libertad* is the next port that we stop at," I say, in order to ward off any further reference to this gentleman's annoyances.

"Yes ; I get off there, as I have to go up into the interior on business. You will have a terrible time of it going across to San Pedro. I have often thought of going

there ; but from what I have heard about the roads, and the starvation, and the chances of attack (chances, mind, I say—for I don't want to frighten you, but there is nothing really to eat), and other discomforts, I have decided to give up the idea. I should like, however, to accompany you," he added, after a short pause.

"Why not ?" say I, catching at the opportunity of securing a travelling companion. "You and your servant and mules joined with mine (for I am to hire a lad and muleteer at Amapala), would make quite a respectable company. We should protect the one the other, if needs be. I have little fear, and surely there must be something to be got to eat. How do the people live themselves ?"

"A plantain and a cigarillo is all they require," replied Mr Z. "You will suffer very much from want of food. Take what you can with you. For myself, I could not do without my dinner more than twice a-week. I have always been accustomed to live well. No, no—at my time of life it would not do. Glad the consul at Amapala will look after you. Have you got a revolver ?"

"A revolver ! no. I never fired one in my life," I replied in terror. "I would much rather be without one."

"Wait a moment," replied Mr Z. He rose and went into his cabin, returning with a mahogany case. He opened this, and displayed reposing therein two revolvers ; one a large weapon, the other some sizes smaller.

"This is the jewellery I travel with," he continued ; "but the smaller revolver is of no use to me. I bought this, intending it for a wedding present to a girl in the interior ; but the poor thing

died suddenly, and so I have a revolver to spare. This is for you," he said, putting it into my hand.

I thanked him for his kindness, but I put it back, saying that I could never make up my mind to fire it.

"Do you think," he asked, "that a man dies any sooner because he has made his will?"

"No; what do you mean?"

"I mean that danger will not come upon you because you possess a revolver. Come, don't be proud—take this from an old man and a countryman. We are in a

strange land, and we ought to help one another if we can."

Set before me in this manner, to refuse would have been worse than impertinence. I therefore accepted the revolver, lamenting only, that I could not there and then enter a shooting-gallery, and there make my mark. So I said.

Mr Z. replied, "You are a sensible woman, and I am very much obliged to you for your company. Wish I was going with you; but can't—can't see my way." So saying he plunged into his cabin, and I was left in the warlike attitude of holding a revolver.

CHAPTER IV.

No wonder that Master C., who had bundled himself towards the end of the deck whereon I was standing, looking, I have no doubt, ruefully upon this acquisition, should exclaim as he saw me—"You have got a revolver there, stranger, and you are in a jolly fix, ain't you now, how to fire it off?"

That was just my difficulty, so I replied meekly, "Can you tell me if it is loaded?"

"Why, don't you know?" replied the youth with great contempt.

"Mr Z. has just given it to me, and I forgot to ask him if it were loaded or not. Do you know anything about revolvers?"

"Should rather think I did," was the response. "Let us have a try." As he spoke he took the weapon out of my hand, and soon solved the doubt, as he discharged a ringing shot over the ship's side.

The report brought two or three of the stewards to where we stood, wanting to know what the noise was about.

"Did ye think I had killed yer grandmother?" answered the youth very rudely. Then as he saw the purser coming along, he changed his tone, and commenced to explain the situation, asseverating very strongly that the revolver would be in far better hands if the lady would give it to him.

As no one made any reply to this, Master C. addressed himself directly to me. "It is a jolly good revolver," he said, "and no use to a woman. Come now, I'll give yer five dollars for it; that's a fair deal!"

"I have told you that Mr Z. has made me a present of this revolver,—pray restore it."

As the young gentleman seemed more than unwilling to part with this, his neighbour's property, the purser intervened, and speedily simplified the proceedings.

He rapped the boy's head, hurled him aside, and held the revolver in his own hands, within a minute of time; and then in a calm, deliberate manner he showed me how to manage this murderous little instrument.

"You had better let your *mozo* carry this for you," said this good-natured gentleman. "I think I have a little case somewhere which this will fit into. I will look at once, as early to-morrow we reach La Libertad, and I shall be busy." So saying, he withdrew.

The day and the night passed, and the early morning found me fast asleep when the port of La Libertad was reached and left. As soon as I made my appearance on deck, one of the stewards accosted me, as he pointed to the canvas bag which had come on board with Mr Z.

"The gentleman left his compliments for you, madam," he said; "and I was to give you these cocoa-nuts. Mr Z. thought you might like them. Mr Z. would like to have shaken hands with you, but he would not have you called. He told me to say that he hoped you would have a good journey, and to be sure and get provisions wherever you can."

This was the first and last I have seen of Mr Z., but I shall always have a kindly remembrance of this sympathising eccentric fellow-traveller.

La Union was to be our next port, and in consequence the whole of the C. family were in a state of high excitement, as this was their point of debarkation. Great was the scrubbing and dressing; and as some of their old clothes were cast into the sea, I rescinded the wish of my heart,—viz., that the accordion would be assigned to the deep in their company. Much as we all had suffered from that instrument, and often as we had vowed vengeance against it, I don't think any one even shivered as the eldest C. girl performed "Home, sweet home" for the last time. It was an "adieu" to us in a manner, and they were going home to

"father." The children looked softened, too, as they were put into fresh raiment; and Master C. was so civil to me that I made over the bag of cocoa-nuts to him and his on the spot.

Amapala was the next port, so I made my arrangements, and we were all in marching order when, some hours later, we stood opposite La Union.

Like most places on this coast, La Union appeared to be an assemblage of red-tiled roofs, built in groups, the gaps being filled up by dwarf, green shrubs, and here and there by a tall palm-tree: the shore low and sandy, and looking as if quite ready to slip into the sea on the smallest provocation. This is a place of some magnitude, however, and is more regularly built farther in the interior. A good deal of trade is done here, and La Union holds the reputation of being an improving and progressive town.

The boats going to and fro from the port to a ship is, I think, always an object of interest to the seafarers, even if there is nothing concerned but a passing interest in the scene. On this occasion I looked across the water with more than ordinary curiosity, as the anxiety displayed by the C. family to greet the husband and father had quite enlisted my sympathies. Several boats had come to the ship's side, conveying merchandise and visitors, but no Mr C. put in an appearance.

The patience of the younger girl was becoming exhausted, and she had just fetched her breath for a scream, when a sailor came on the poop, and presented a letter to Mrs C., the mother. This was to tell her that Mr C. was far away up the country, but that he had deputed the vice-consul to meet her and her children, and that

apartments would be ready for her in La Union.

The poor woman was at once disappointed and relieved. Very soon a large boat was waiting at the ship's side. A nice pleasant-looking man stepped on board, and it was announced that he had come, as requested, to fetch away Mrs. C.

Whilst the luggage was being put in the boat, the consul held a little chat with me, and offered to take me over with them to see La Union, and partake of the hospitality of his house. There would be a difficulty about my return, and the time was very short, so I was obliged to decline the favour. All over the world the American men are particularly kind to lone females, and I scored this gentleman as one example more on my list.

After a short conference with the captain, the consul and his charges took their departure. Mrs. C.'s blue feather and the redoubtable accordion perched on a mountain of baggage was the last we saw of this family. Now for Amapala.

"I shall order a particularly good dinner on your account, as you will dine before you leave us," said Captain C., laughing. "What do you like best? You know it will be long before you get a decent meal again."

This hard fact had by this time been pretty well impressed upon me; but I am not one to "suck sorrow through the long tube," and so I replied, "Do not discourage a lone female, if you please; other people have passed through rough travelling, and why should not I?"

The captain was too kind-hearted to intentionally cause me any alarm, but recommended the only working part of the Honduras railway—that which runs from San Pedro

Sula to Puerto Cortez—as the most direct route to get out of the country.

We were seated at the promised good dinner when the port of Amapala was reached. "Mr Bahl, the consul, will come on board," somebody said. "Don't hurry; he will take his time, and so will we."

Apparently the consul did take his time, for we waited long before the custom-house boat put off from the shore. As it came nearer, we saw that two persons occupied it—a little white man, and a very large and very black man.

"The consul is not coming this time," said an officer; "here's his clerk and the captain."

"Captain who?" I could not help repeating.

"Oh," laughed the purser, "that black fellow is called 'captain' on account of his warlike performances. He has fought, he says, in three of the revolutions in which this country delighted to revel some years ago; and, according to his own account, he was the means of routing the enemy on more than one occasion."

"Do you believe this?"

"Not a word. The captain is an awful fellow to brag, but he can work and does work; I will say that for him."

"What brings him here?" I ask.

"He is the consul's servant, and I daresay has been sent to fetch or carry something for the custom-house. I hope to goodness he has brought some fresh fish," continued the purser. "Have you your letter of introduction to Mr Bahl? As he is not here, you had better send it to the clerk. That gentleman is transacting some business with Captain C. just now, but I will see about it."

Presently up came the clerk. He was a dapper little man with a

large white face, which did not impress me very favourably as to the salubrity of Amapala. I found, however, on conversing further, that he was ready to vouch that Amapala was a perfect sanitarium. "Fever! yah—no!" exclaimed he, in drawled out English. "People die! yes, some time all must; but fever here—ah, no, no!"

"Nor snakes neither," interposed the chief engineer, with a wink at his neighbour.

"Nor yet snakes—no, no; mountain-leopards, one or two—never seen—all nonsense."

"But these mountain-leopards used to be called tigers," persisted the engineer. "Why, that mountain over there is still called the Mountain of Tigers—*La Montaña de los Tigres*. You have it in both languages."

The little clerk would not admit the tigers, and knew nothing about the reason why the mountain indicated should bear such an ominous name. I was now told that my departure would be a matter of five minutes only; and I employed these in bidding farewell to the captain and officers of the good steamer Clyde. God bless them all, wherever they may be now. They were very, very kind to "Soltera."

When I was seated in the boat, the little clerk told me that I would have to spend a night, or perhaps two nights, in Amapala. The consul is a bachelor, and his sister-in-law is unfortunately away on a visit. "I will give the note when we land; I don't think the office will be closed," said he.

When we did land, it was quite dark. The black man took the luggage out of the boat, wading with it to the shore, for the boat could not come quite up to the landing-place. This done, he seized me as if I had been a cat, without word or sign, and from his

strong arms I was deposited on the strand of Amapala.

"Wait, wait a bit, ya-ar," said this huge porter. "Clerk him gone into office to talk to consul, let him read letter,—you brought letter 'troduction, eh?"

"Yes. I hope I shall not have to wait long."

"No; consul read letter, and send him ar-ders."

I suppose the consul did read the letter, for the clerk came out, and, poking in the dark to find me, said—

"The consul will write or send to you early in the morning: the only decent *posada* in Amapala is close here. You had better leave your heavy luggage in the office; I will take care of it. Now, captain, take the lady's portmanteau."

My black friend shouldered the portmanteau, and with—"You follow me close; I all right—you trust me; I as good as English,"—I threaded my way through what in courtesy must be called the streets of Amapala. The *posada* was not quite so near as I had thought; and as soon as we had quite quitted the shore the black man said, "You wa-ant to go into the country, over the mountains?"

"Yes, I wish to get off as quickly as possible."

"Have you got serva-ant? I know good serva-ant, speak English wa-al; he knows all over the country—is strong—good cook. But it will cost you money, ah."

"Will it?" I replied quickly, for I saw at once what he was driving at; "I do not intend going beyond a certain sum, and——"

"Wha-at will you call that sum in dollars?"

"Never you mind, you are the consul's cook, and this is of no import to you."

"Ah, ya-as, ya-as; but if you make it worth while to ta-ake me

long, you find it will be good. I know country—I respectable servant."

We had arrived at the *posada* by this time. Only one door was open, and within could be seen, by the light of a solitary candle, a long brown table on which some glasses stood.

A figure came forth from behind this barrier. He was a nice-looking lad, and was, moreover, that *rara avis*, a very clean-looking lad.

"Oh, it's you," he said to the black.

"Ya-as. I bring this lady here. Consul sent me with her, 'cause I speak English so well. Great com-fa-art, have man about you that knows well how to speak English!" continued this conceited fellow, turning to me.

"Will you arrange for me to have a decent room and some refreshment presently?" said I. "Where is the woman of the house? I wish to speak to her."

"Oh no, I arrange," continued the black man. "You see I speak English."

"But I suppose the hostess speaks Spanish," I replied, cutting him short; and in that language I asked the lad to go and find her.

He did so, and a tall pleasant-looking woman returned with him. She said she could supply me with what I required, and then the question of charges came under discussion.

The "captain" here intervened and meddled to such an extent, that the lad, evidently annoyed at his bad manners, said, "Hold thy tongue; the Señora understands pretty well the language; she knows what is right to pay."

I really did not know, but I felt grateful to the youth for endeavouring to quench this nuisance, and so answered that the consul knew that I would pay what was just.

Then I gave this very disagreeable porter a peseta (English, ten-pence) for carrying the portmanteau, and very heartily gave him good-night.

Two men came in as the "captain" went out, and we were much amused to hear him informing them of the charge he was taking of the English lady—"Grand thing to speak English," I heard him say in that language, as he finally took himself off.

The men naturally scanned me after this remark, but respectfully and without showing any curiosity. They ordered "vino blanco," and sat themselves down to smoke.

"Pray excuse our taking you through the wine-shop," said the landlady, "but we have mislaid the key of the other door. It will be found to-morrow. See, Eduardo, take that box into the room for the lady."

A lantern was brought, and we passed through the back of the bar, and came out upon a wide verandah, which was bordered by a narrow strip of garden bounded by a high wall.

We entered the guest-chamber. Had I been qualifying for prison life, here was an opportunity for commencing an apprenticeship. The room was large, the aperture for the window closed by a heavy shutter with a bar across it; red tiles, discoloured by dirt and grease, composed the floor, and the dust lay in little heaps in some of the ridges of the most uneven ones. A bed covered by a bull's hide in place of a mattress, and a leathern pillow, were the correct thing here to serve as a place of "rest." A wooden table placed against the wall, and a rocking-chair in fair condition, completed the furniture. Not a vestige of toilet-ware of any sort, not a drop of water, nor any towel.

The lad deposited the portmantau on the floor, and as this cheerful apartment was pervaded by a frowzy smell, I asked him to open the shutter. He hesitated, and looked inquiringly at the landlady. Not understanding the reason of this, I said—

"There are iron bars, or a lattice, behind the shutter—nobody can get in; I want air."

"No, no," answered the landlady; "but at night, it was possible—very rare—once in a lifetime—a *serpiente* (snake) might crawl through."

"Keep the shutter close then," I reply with energy. "I did not think snakes came so near the houses. How dreadful!"

The boy explained that about a fortnight before a small *serpiente* had crawled one hot night through the lattice-bars, and descended into this chamber. "There was a large growth of thick damp herbage under the wall on that side," he said, "and it might be that a snake's hole was there."

"But why on earth is it not cleared or burnt out?" said I; "it is very dangerous for every one to let the herbage remain there."

"Quien sabe?" he replied; and then the opposite door was pointed out to me as being the one through which I could enter from the street. This was a very strong door, but it was unlocked, the key being missing, as I was told on my arrival. There was a latch, by which the occupant could open it when the impediment enforced by the lock should be removed.

The landlady proposed to fetch a sheet and a pillow-slip, and then she added, with an air of triumph, "I shall bring you some tea—only think—tea. I know the English like that. What I have is very good—a present from an Englishman: he was hard to wait

on, and he abused everything, but he had a good heart, Señora, and he gave me two pounds of beautiful tea."

"That was for your own drinking?"

"No, I don't like it much. The Englishman said,—he was a coarse man, Señora,—he would leave it for me to give to any poor devil of his country who might come to stay here."

She laughed as if it was the finest joke, and never seemed to perceive the sarcasm which might be veiled in the guise of this speech and present: under the circumstances I was very glad to represent the "poor devil." She went out laughing heartily, and the boy and I and the lantern were left alone.

"Can you get me a little water?" I asked him, and a—here I could not summon the Spanish for basin, so I had recourse to signs.

"Oh yes, I know—wash face; leave it to me, I will bring what you want. I waited on an American lady once in travelling, and she liked much water," and as he spoke, he darted off with the lantern. I sat down on the bed, hoping that the tea would be brought quickly, and wondering what the beverage would be like.

The landlady returned with a candlestick in one hand in which was set up a large wax candle; under her arm was bundled the promised bed-linen, which, rather to my surprise, was clean and fine, the upper hem of the sheet being bordered with wide lace. The pillow-slip was trimmed in like manner; and when the bed was made up and a scarlet coverlet thrown over all, the bedplace really looked like a bright spot in this desert, and I began to expect other improvements.

Time brought the tea, and very

good it proved. The English gentleman had evidently taught the hostess how to make use of his gift. The boy, too, brought toilet-ware piece by piece in spasms, and lastly a large red earthen jar full of water. He had fetched it from a well close at hand, and it was delightfully pure and fresh.

The lad withdrew, and then returning to the door summoned the landlady. A great whispering went on for some minutes: at length my hostess returned, and said in rather a mysterious manner, "You are going to Comayagua, are you not?"

"I shall pass through that town," I answered; "but why do you ask?"

"Oh, the boy comes from that part, and he does not want to remain in Amapala. Why not take him as your *mozo*? He is a good lad, and I would like to get him a place."

"He is in your employ, is he not?" I asked.

"What you may call employ, yes; but there is nothing to do for a lad like him. He sells wine for me, true; but I cannot pay him—trade very dull, and very few come to stay at this *posada*. The lad only lives by doing a little tailoring here and there."

I thought this plan might do, as the landlady seemed so independent of Eduardo's services. She proceeded to give him a good character, and I promised that the consul's opinion should be taken on the matter. Good night was given, and I went to the door to fasten it after the woman's departure. It was closed by a latch; but it was perfectly

innocent of either lock or bolt. There was nothing for it but to put the handle of my tooth-brush across the latch, and within it; and retire to bed with trust in Providence.

The next day came a note from Mr Bahl, telling me that I must wait one day at the *posada*, and he would arrange everything for my travelling onward; the lad Eduardo was required to attend at the office, if I would signify my intention of engaging him; and would I call early the day afterwards?

Little to do, nothing to see; heat and mosquitoes to endure,—such was the portion of the waiting-hours. At the dinner-time I went into the dining-room, thinking it would be well to eat something substantial, and a number of dishes on the table seemed to offer a choice.

Variety there was, and very unappetising variety. The soup, called chicken-broth, was nothing better than drowned hen; and the meat, cut in strips, looked like leathern sandals from the remotest antiquity. Everything that could be chopped up was chopped up; vegetables which would have passed muster had they been served whole, were tormented into squash, and little black beans in yellow dishes were the only edibles which, owing to their small size, had escaped the universal carnage.

Some persons present, however, did justice to this feast. Long may there be found some to do so. For myself, I was thankful when the time arrived to pay a visit to the consul.

(To be continued.)

THE SCOTTISH PARODY ON HOME RULE.

THE exciting pastime of flogging a dead horse is being practised just now in Scotland with praiseworthy zeal by a small knot of patriots. The "wide jolly public"—to use a phrase of James Hannay's—have been jogging along in a state of tolerable contentment with the machinery of Government. But the patriots are determined that they shall not be content. That curious kind of legalised debating-society—the Convention of Royal Burghs—has convened a meeting of "leading public men" for an early day, to consider the mode of administering Scottish affairs. The immediate occasion of this proceeding is the rejection of the Local Government Bill of last session; and the motive, we readily assume, is something more than a desire to be fussy, and a wish to help a lame dog over a stile. There is a hazy notion, we doubt not, in the minds of the originators of the meeting, that they are thereby promoting what is called "decentralisation," and are proving themselves to be possessed of the dauntless spirit which nerved the arm of Sir William Wallace, and impelled the stool of Jenny Geddes. All honour to that spirit say we; but what if the scheme which these worthies are promoting be calculated to lead to results the very opposite of what they desire, and to bind the sturdy Scot more firmly than ever in the coils of Southern red-tape? That such would be the effect of all of the proposals which seem to find favour in the eyes of Town Councils and Liberal Associations, we propose in a few words to show.

At present, as everybody knows, the Home Secretary is the Minister

primarily responsible for the conduct of Scottish affairs. The only other member of the Cabinet who has any special connection with Scotland is the President of the Council, who not only is the head of the Scotch Education Department, but watches over the health of our flocks and herds. There are others, not usually of Cabinet rank, like the First Commissioner of Works and the Postmaster-General, whose functions extend over the whole island, and therefore include the northern portion of it. All of these Ministers, but especially the Home Secretary, are obliged constantly to resort to the Lord Advocate for advice and assistance. It is obvious that this would still be the case, though there were half-a-dozen non-legal Ministers specially devoted to Scottish business. So long as Scotland, to her great honour, retains her own system of municipal law, the assistance of a high official, practically versed in that law, must always be essential, not only to mould purely Scotch legislation, but to adapt general measures to the wants of Scotland. But it is not only in the work of legislation that the advice and assistance of the Lord Advocate are required. His frequent residence in Scotland, the intimate acquaintance which his professional training gives him with the men and manners of all parts of the country, and his position as public prosecutor, at the head of a large staff of responsible officials in every county and in every town of importance,—all these make his information of the most minute and trustworthy kind, and his advice on the ordinary business of administration such as no prudent Min-

ister can afford to dispense with. The Lord Advocate has thus come, by the irresistible force of knowledge and capacity, to occupy a position of much greater influence than the strict limits of his office would seem to infer. Instead of merely revising or adapting bills, he has for many years been charged with the duty of conducting them through the House of Commons. Instead of merely supplying the information for answering questions, it has been found convenient as a rule that he should answer the questions direct. So much for his position in Parliament. Outside St Stephen's, successive Home Secretaries have delegated to him to a great extent the reception of deputations, and they have consulted him largely in the exercise of patronage.

That is the present mode of conducting Scottish public business in London. But a very great deal of Scottish public business is conducted not in London but in Edinburgh. The Board of Supervision performs all the most important duties of the Local Government Board in England—that is to say, all the duties connected with the poor-law and with public health. The Board of Manufactures fills the place of the Trustees of the National Gallery and the Science and Art Department at Kensington; the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses correspond to the Brethren of the Trinity House. The Lunacy Board, the Prison Board, and the Fishery Board exercise supreme control in their respective spheres. There are also certain departments, such as those of the Registrar-General and the Queen's Remembrancer, which are national in their scope and independent in their action, except in so far as the latter is controlled by the Treasury.

With the Boards and Departments in Edinburgh it is not proposed by the Convention of Royal Burghs directly to interfere. Time was when they also were assailed by the aggressive zeal of reformers; but the Camperdown Commission of 1870 conclusively established that they were doing their work efficiently and cheaply, and we imagine that few Scotsmen would now be so rash as to propose their abolition. Let us take care that the same result is not brought about, however unintentionally, by any of the schemes actually propounded.

It is nearly thirty years since the late Lord Eglinton raised a discussion in the House of Lords on a number of old Scotia's grievances, and dwelt with the fervour of his enthusiastic nature alike on the loss of her great officers and on the decay of her ancient palaces. The practical part of his resolution was successfully opposed by two eminent Scotsmen—the Premier of the day, Lord Aberdeen, and Fox Maule, then Lord Panmure. Since that time the demand for some kind of parliamentary official to assume the political duties of the Lord Advocate has been renewed in various forms and by members of Parliament on both sides of the House. It was raised in 1858 by Mr Baxter, and opposed by Mr Bouverie, Mr Edward Ellice, Lord Palmerston, Lord President Inglis, who was then Lord Advocate, and by Lord Beaconsfield, then leader of the House. It was again raised in 1864 by Sir James Fergusson, and opposed by Lord Advocate Moncreiff and Sir William Dunbar. The question was one of those submitted to the consideration of the Camperdown Commission in 1870, and after taking evidence upon it, they rejected the alternative proposals for a Secretary of State or an official

corresponding to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and recommended the appointment of a special Under-Secretary in the Home Office. This idea was afterwards carried out by Sir Richard Cross in his abortive Under-Secretary Bill of 1878. A new proposal was embodied by the present Government in their Local Government Bill of last session, but it fared no better than its predecessors. Happily, even the Convention of Royal Burghs is not disposed to quarrel with the House of Lords for rejecting it, for they regard it as having lamentably fallen short of the requirements of the case. It will be seen, however, from this short recital, that the question is by no means a party one, having been agitated with equal freedom on both sides of politics.

The reasons assigned for desiring a change have somewhat varied, but they may roughly be classed under three heads. At one time the great argument was, that the Lord Advocate, being generally a lawyer in large private practice, had frequent distractions from his public duties, and could not always be found in London even during the session of Parliament. This argument, whatever foundation it may have had at one time (and probably it never had much), has long ceased to be of any weight. Recent Lord Advocates have abandoned all idea of attending the Courts in Edinburgh while Parliament is sitting. They are as constant in their residence in London during the session as any other Minister; and, under the present *régime*, they sit up with "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform" all through those weary August nights to which the admirable management of the Liberal party has of late years relegated all the most ambitious legislation of the year. Perhaps there

never was a more plaintive sight than the present Lord Advocate presented when he sat in his place till six o'clock on an August morning, assisting his colleagues to emaculate his own office, while his happier brethren of the long robe were peacefully slumbering in Highland shooting-lodges after a long day on the fragrant heather.

The second argument against the present system is something like this. It is said that the Lord Advocate, from being a subordinate member of the Government, has not sufficient influence to obtain a good place for his bills, and that consequently Scotland has not come in for her fair share of legislation. The first half of this complaint has something in it, because it is undoubtedly true that Scottish bills have frequently been fixed for odd days and late hours. How far that is due to want of spirit among the Scotch Liberal members, rather than to want of influence on the part of the Lord Advocate, we do not stop to inquire. But we altogether dispute the second half of the complaint, which is, after all, the essential part of it. It is impossible to name at this moment a single department of legislation in which Scotland is behind the sister country. People who make this complaint are apt to forget that much of the most important statute law is of general application. But, even taking the subjects on which Scots law requires to be specially dealt with, where is the evidence of comparative neglect? It was only a few years ago, and in rather a lame and halting fashion, that Parliament conferred on England the advantages of a public prosecutor, which Scotland has enjoyed for centuries. It was only last session that the English law of bankruptcy was put upon something like the same firm

and satisfactory footing that has existed in Scotland since 1856. It was only the other day that the president of the English Divorce Court publicly lamented that the English law of marriage was far behind the Scotch in compelling a judge to send a husband to prison, however large an allowance he may be making for his wife, if he finds it not conducive to the happiness of either that they should live in the same house. Has the Scottish system of national education received less attention from Parliament than the English? Notoriously it has received more, for it has longer been subject to State regulation. Have the grievances of our farmers been neglected while those of their southern brethren have been removed? The answer is, that the Agricultural Holdings Act for each country passed in the same session; and that hypothec in Scotland has been abolished, while the law of distress in England remains. Is the law of entail more stringent in Scotland than in England? Is her system of titles to land more complicated or less secure? Is her mercantile law more antiquated? Have the interests of her working classes been less carefully guarded? Has she been less blessed by the operations of amateur legislators in regulating the property of married persons? The answer to every one of these questions is a negative, and each of them recalls a series of statutes which, whatever may be thought of the policy of some of them, are at least as powerful for good or evil in the one country as in the other.

It is, indeed, a curious commentary on the charge of legislative inactivity for Scotland that there is not a single Lord Advocate, among those who have sat in Parliament for any length of time within the

last forty years, who has not been able to connect his name with some measure of first-rate importance. The Poor Law Act of Lord Colonsay, the Entail Act of Lord Ruthenford, the Bankruptcy Act of Lord Moncreiff, the Universities Act of Lord President Inglis, the Conveyancing Acts of Lord Gordon (not to mention the Scotch Reform Act, which he steered through the Commons), the Education Act of Lord Young, and the Roads and Bridges Act of Lord Watson, rise to one's mind the moment these past Lord Advocates are named. It is too soon yet to say what may be ultimately considered the legislative *chef d'œuvre* of Mr Balfour, but he has neither shown unwillingness to try his hand at legislation nor inability to carry his bills into law; while it is universally acknowledged—and by none more readily than by his political opponents—that in the conduct of these bills he has shown a courtesy, tact, and mastery of the subject which could not have been excelled by any of the possible aspirants to the office of Minister for Scotland.

The third argument against the present system, though rather kept in the background, is perhaps the most potent of all with those who clamour for a change. It is this, that the position of virtual Minister for Scotland ought not to be confined to the members of a single profession. If the members of this profession be best fitted by knowledge and experience for the duties of the office, it is a little difficult to see why it should be desirable in the public interest to go beyond them. But any system which has an air of exclusiveness about it is peculiarly liable to suffer prejudice in the public eye; and therefore it may be well to point out, that though the office

of Lord Advocate is limited to a single profession, the profession itself is open to all comers. If the question whether the acting Minister for Scotland is to be selected from the 60 Scottish members of Parliament, or from the 200 practising members of the bar, has any interest at all for a farmer in Dumfriesshire or a grocer in Aberdeen, we should say that the farmer or the grocer is much more likely to see his son attain the desired position by the latter route than by the former. The Scottish bar has long been representative of the various classes and callings in the country, in quite a remarkable degree. Peers and country gentlemen, soldiers and sailors, professors and doctors, actors and men of letters, lawyers of every grade and ministers of every denomination, merchants and shopkeepers, capitalists and artisans, Lowland farmers and Highland crofters, have all sent their sons to walk the boards of the Parliament House. And as the profession is fairly representative of the country, so the office of Lord Advocate is fairly representative of the profession. During the last thirty years there have been ten Lord Advocates, of whom three were sons of lawyers, three of parish ministers, two of country gentlemen, one of an officer in the army, and one of a merchant. It may safely be said that there is no high public office which more completely fulfils the conditions of the *carrière ouverte* than the office of Lord Advocate of Scotland.

We have dealt thus minutely with the arguments urged against the present system, because the subject is one on which public opinion is very apt to be misled. It "splits the ears of the groundlings" to say, "Why should our affairs be administered by a mere

lawyer? Why should our legislation be neglected? Why should we not have a Secretary of State all to ourselves?" Such questions are easily asked on platforms, and the people to whom they are addressed do not stop to inquire how far they proceed on false assumptions, and how far on Utopian dreams. We claim to have shown that our affairs are administered by a lawyer only in so far as a knowledge of law is necessary to their due administration; that there is nothing invidious in the selection of a lawyer for such functions, because no one else could properly discharge them; and that, so far from our legislation having been neglected, it stands at this moment in a rather more advanced state than that of England.

As to the appointment of a Secretary of State, the idea is a pure chimera. Every statesman of authority in the country—and none more emphatically than the present Prime Minister—has rejected the proposal as quite inadmissible. Lord Cockburn was a sturdy enough Scot, and it is nearly sixty years since he wrote in the 'Edinburgh Review'—"There is no more need for a separate Secretary for Scotland than for Yorkshire, Northumberland, or Wales." Nothing has occurred since then to make the need any greater; on the contrary, the tendency of all legislation, and of all social progress, has been to draw the bonds between the two countries more closely together, to the great benefit of both. A Secretary of State for Scotland, with the usual paraphernalia of under-secretaries and private secretaries, and clerks and messengers, would first become a nuisance and then a scandal. With all the ardour of a new official, he would go foraging about among the other departments for work to

occupy himself and his yawning subordinates, and the earliest effect of a change, promoted in the interests of Scottish nationality, would be to destroy all distinctively Scottish administration. The Edinburgh boards would one by one be absorbed into the London department, and the real power of the London department, after the manner of all public offices possessing parliamentary chiefs, would gradually concentrate itself in the hands of the permanent staff. There would inevitably be conflicts with the Home Office, which would probably result in the defeat of the new department; and the net result of a change, demanded by thoughtless patriotism, would be, that all Scottish public business would be transacted in London by subordinate officials, and that the parliamentary affairs of Scotland, as distinguished from those of the kingdom at large, would be managed by a half-idle Minister, unfamiliar with her law, and obliged, at every turn, to resort to the Lord Advocate for information and guidance. An administrative chaos so complete would soon be found intolerable; and it would be paying a poor compliment to the sense or foresight of any Government to suppose that they would entertain for a moment the idea of giving it a trial.

The proposal to constitute a Minister of lower rank than a Secretary of State, but yet at the head of a department, is only a little less objectionable than that which we have just been considering. We do not know in whose fertile brain the bill of last session was conceived. Certainly Sir William Harcourt showed none of the partiality of a parent in introducing it. Never was an unhappy bantling so sneered at by its putative father. In substance he said

to the Scottish members—"The present system works perfectly well. The Lord Advocate and the Solicitor-General are excellent fellows, and I trust them implicitly. As for Lord Rosebery, I love him dearly, though we couldn't get on. There is very little Scotch business to do, and it is a bad thing to manufacture business. But you are always calling out for a change. Here, then, is a sop to throw to your constituents, and much good may it do them and you!" There is positively no caricature in this description of Sir William Harcourt's speech. The Minister then proceeded to unfold his scheme, which created a bogus board—that is, a board which was never meant to meet—with a president at £2000 a-year, and a mysterious staff of "secretaries and other officers," to receive such salaries as the Treasury might determine. Appended to the bill was a formidable schedule of Acts of Parliament, imposing certain duties of a miscellaneous nature on the Home Secretary and the Privy Council; and the whole was qualified with a saving clause, to salve the wounded feelings of the Lord Advocate, providing that nothing in this Act contained should "prejudice or interfere with any rights, powers, privileges, or duties vested in or imposed on the Lord Advocate by virtue of any Act of Parliament or custom." As the whole agitation, of which the bill was the outcome, had for years been directed against the exercise by the Lord Advocate of political functions, it was difficult to see how the clause could have any meaning if the bill was intended to satisfy the agitators. But no doubt the clause, like the Transvaal Convention, served its purpose for the moment, by looking well—on paper.

The reception of the bill by the Faculty of Advocates formed a curious episode in its history. We have some recollection that when Sir Richard Cross introduced his comparatively mild Under-Secretary Bill of 1878, that learned body was up in arms against it; and, not content with petitioning Parliament for its rejection, sent a deputation to the Home Secretary, with Dean of Faculty Fraser at its head, to remonstrate against so flagrant an invasion of the rights and privileges of the office of Lord Advocate. No one complained of their action then, for it was thought natural and fitting that they should regard themselves as peculiarly charged with the defence of those rights and privileges. They dwelt, not without a great deal of public sympathy, on the eminent services of former holders of the office, and they quoted to Sir Richard the words of Lord Beaconsfield in 1858: "I must say my experience leads me to this conviction, that of all public offices, none have been sustained during the last twenty years with such continuous ability and sound intelligence as the office of Lord Advocate of Scotland." Recent declarations by Sir Richard Cross prove that their remonstrances made a great impression upon him, and the result was that the bill was dropped. But last summer the outside world learned with surprise that a change had come o'er the spirit of their dream. Instead of petitioning or sending deputations against the present Government's bill, they actually resolved by a narrow majority to petition in its favour. In the case of a body so acute, it was of course impossible to suppose that they had been gulled by the transparent mockery of the saving clause; but the disagreeable alternative was, that the fact of the bill being

proposed by a Liberal Government made all the difference. It was a fresh illustration of the saying—

"That in the captain's but a choleric word,
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy."

The worst of it was, that the action of his brethren, procured—shall we venture to suppose?—by the action of his political confederates, resulted in the present Lord Advocate cutting a very sorry figure in the debates on the bill in the House of Commons. We have cheerfully borne testimony to the skill and courtesy which Mr Balfour has shown in the general management of Scottish business. But we cannot say that his speech on this subject was at all an edifying performance. Instead of saying a word for the ancient and honourable office which he holds, he allowed himself for a long time to be completely muzzled; and then, when he was forced by repeated taunts to explain his position, he sought an ignoble shelter behind a scratch division of his brethren. Let any one compare his speech on that occasion with the manly and weighty defence of the office by the present Lord President in 1858, and the difference will be painfully apparent.

The history of the measure is too fresh in the public memory to require recapitulation. Its defects were pointed out by Mr Charles Dalrymple in a speech remarkable both for humour and force. When the imposing list of Acts of Parliament was critically examined, it was found that the duties therein prescribed would not afford employment for one day in the week to the proposed President, let alone the "secretaries and other officers." It thus became apparent that the new department could only justify

its existence by taking the conduct of legislation out of the hands of the Lord Advocate on the one hand, and by poaching on the domain of the local boards on the other. Indeed the Home Secretary, at an early stage of the discussion, admitted, with cynical frankness, not only that this last would be the effect, but that it was the intention, of the measure; for, when asked where he proposed to find the money for the new staff, he replied that it would be the first duty of the president to inquire into the working of the Edinburgh boards, and to cut and carve in such a manner as to provide salaries for his subordinates. It is unnecessary to point out how objectionable such a proceeding would have been. If the Edinburgh boards are too expensively managed, by all means let their expenses be curtailed, although it is not very likely that there can be any great abuse, seeing that they passed through the ordeal of a searching inquiry so lately as 1870. But to let loose among them, not a calm and impartial investigator, but a hungry official, and to tell him that, unless he lopped off a clerk here, and docked a salary there, or (better still) rolled several boards into one, his own staff must starve, seemed about the most extraordinary way of carrying out an administrative reform that ever entered into the mind of man. Then, as to the legislative functions of the new president, it was plain enough that, while he would be of sufficient official rank to overshadow the Lord Advocate, he would not (apart from personal considerations) be influential enough to obtain any better hearing for Scottish demands. We mention personal considerations, because any outside support accorded to the measure was probably to a large extent due to the

popularity of Lord Rosebery, and the belief that he would be the holder of the new office. But Lord Rosebery sailed away to the southern seas, and any little interest which the measure had excited began to droop, until at last it received its quietus at the hands of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, with no one to shed a tear over its grave.

The efforts of the Convention of Royal Burghs will, no doubt, be directed towards obtaining a full-blown Secretary of State, and, if so, they will certainly fail. Whether the result will be a mere resurrection of the bill of last session, or some new and ingenious "Popkins's plan," it is impossible to say. In all probability, the fierce combats that are impending will leave no room for placid discussions on administrative machinery. But, whenever the agitation again takes practical shape, the people of Scotland will do well to guard against one thing, and that is a Department. The appointment of an additional Under-Secretary in the Home Office, or a Scotch Lord of the Treasury with rather fuller powers, would do no great harm, though it might do no great good. Such an appointment would only be amplifying a little the existing system. But the creation of a new department means a permanent staff; and we cannot too emphatically repeat that a permanent staff means conflict of authority, the manufacture of business, more red-tape, and more centralisation.

We have heard it assigned as a reason for making some change, that there is great difficulty in getting anything for Scotland out of the Treasury. Now the Treasury is a high-sounding word, calling up a picture of Premiers and Chancellors of the Exchequer and other great authorities sitting round a table and

making or refusing grants of public money. But everybody who has any practical experience of such matters knows that the Treasury simply means Sir Ralph Lingen and the Financial Secretary for the time being. Except in the rare cases when the Premier himself interposes, these gentlemen are supreme, and even Cabinet Ministers find them often very flinty. If it were proposed to dislodge Sir Ralph Lingen, and to place some open-handed Scot in his place, we could imagine there being some hope of more public money finding its way across the Tweed. But it is idle to suppose that the President of a Local Government Board, or any similar functionary, would be one whit more successful than our present rulers in melting those stony hearts. It lies with the Scottish members to see that their country gets justice in this, as in other respects. The action of public opinion on all governments is now so immediate and so powerful, that there ought to be no difficulty in obtaining for any part of the country any boon which has reason on its side. But the official mind requires some pressure, and the most sensitive part of it is that which hopes for parliamentary support, and fears its withdrawal.

Equally wild is the notion that the creation of a new Minister would tend in some mysterious way to curb the pretensions of the Court of Chancery, and to prevent the repetition of such judgments as that which lately startled the Scottish public in the case of Mr John Orr Ewing's succession. Into the mysteries of English Chancery procedure we do not feel competent to enter, though we share the surprise with which it was discovered that the trust-estate of a domiciled Scotsman might be thrown into Chancery, and the

management of his trustees superseded, merely because an English infant happened to be one of the beneficiaries under his will. But it is plain, from the judgment of the House of Lords, that the jurisdiction there asserted is of a kind deeply rooted in the Chancery Courts; and to imagine that it could be got rid of merely by investing a Scottish peer or member of Parliament with official rank, implies simplicity so profound, that we should have thought all reference to it unnecessary, but for recent indications in some quarters that the case would be used to bolster up the arguments for a new Minister. The undue assumption of jurisdiction is of all subjects one which cannot be corrected without the intervention of lawyers; and to suppose that the Scottish law officers, supported by the Scottish representatives, are not perfectly competent to deal with any real grievance of this purely legal kind, is a libel alike on their sagacity and their public spirit.

We have pointed out the unfortunate results which we believe would flow from the success of the present agitation; and we think them unfortunate, because we agree so far with the agitators that a certain amount of the public business of Scotland ought to be conducted in Scotland, and by persons familiar with Scottish ways of life. It seems to us that these results are none the less certain to follow, that they are not the results which the agitators expect or intend. We believe, further, that the agitation is a factitious one, supported by no real demand on the part of the public. But while all this is the case, it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that the promoters of the movement are playing with a sentiment, creditable and honour-

able in itself, but capable of being made subservient to prejudice and even to passion. These are not times when wise and sober-minded men would desire to loosen by a single strand the ties which bind together the loyal and orderly portions of the community. When treason under the specious name of Home Rule is stalking through the land, and threatening to inflict on representative institutions a deadlier blow than they ever received from monarchs or mobs, let us have no paltry jealousies and no petty dissensions. The party to which Scott belonged, the magazine in which Aytoun wrote, need fear no imputation of indifference to the true spirit of Scottish nationality. But it is one thing to insist on maintaining institutions which are suited to the genius and dear to the hearts of

the Scottish people; it is another and a very different thing to interpose artificial obstructions to the gradual assimilation, in laws and customs, which must inevitably take place between two high-spirited nations, sprung from the same race, inhabiting the same island, owing allegiance to the same Sovereign, united in achievement and in hope. It is well that the daily work of administration should, as far as possible, be in the hands of those who understand national character and local requirements; it is well that Scottish lawyers should look to the preservation of all that is essential in our deeply rooted system of jurisprudence; but it is not well that, in the higher regions of public policy, loyal Scotland should be treated as anything but an integral part of the United Kingdom.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXX.

FEBRUARY 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

THE NEW PHÆDO.

[THE following dialogues were written by the late GEORGE HENRY LEWES, towards the end of 1862. They had been originally intended to serve as introduction to a larger work he was then contemplating, with a view to a systematic exposition of his physiological and psychological researches. This work, however, he never executed; and his mind having been diverted in other directions (his 'Life of Aristotle' was at the time passing through the press), he did not complete even these introductory dialogues, which in the meanwhile he had determined to separate altogether from the larger contemplated work,—giving them the title of "The New Phædo."—ED. B. M.]

I.

My first interview with Hyle made an epoch in my life. He left Oxford before I went there, and probably would have been an utter stranger to me even had he retained his tutorship during the whole of my residence; for he was not only one by nature exclusive and solitary, but he was known to hold opinions which kept men aloof from him in general society. He belonged to none of the parties at Oxford, and was shunned or neglected by them all. A few stanch admirers and pupils spoke of him with deep respect; but he was not a brilliant heretic, and he had no following.

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I heard of him as a man of various accomplishments and perfect sincerity, who had unostentatiously given up very fine prospects, and had devoted himself to science.

After quitting Oxford I occasionally heard of him,—sometimes from my friend Latouche, who loved to differ from him—sometimes from another friend, who disliked his tendencies, and spoke of him as a shallow materialist. Altogether, the impression I had formed of him was of one who might have many excellent qualities, but whom I would rather not become acquainted with. The

taint of materialism was enough to keep me at a distance.

And yet one summer evening, during the intense *ennui* of a seaside visit, I was persuaded by Latouche to accompany him to Hyle's lodgings. We found him seated at his microscope. The small room was littered with books, chemicals, and loose sheets of paper on which were drawings and notes. They covered the sofa, strewn the floor, and nestled in odd corners. In the bow of the window sat his incomparable wife—the one great passion and glory of his life. He was reading aloud when we arrived. But both she and he received us with a pleasant quiet cordiality, which at once set me at my ease. We spoke of Oxford, and of its studies, and the parties there; and as we talked I felt my old prejudice against him rapidly disappearing. Instead of the hardness and coarseness which were associated in my mind with the conception of a materialist, I found, both in his aspect and accent, the peculiar characteristics of a lofty and serene spiritualism. Instead of a brutal antagonism, obtrusively defiant, of long-established conviction, I found a large sympathy and a tolerant flexibility,—noticeable in all minds earnestly bent on ascertaining the truth. We did not directly touch on any of the great questions of philosophy and religion; yet, by indirect reflex indications—rapid glances which disclose long vistas—I was persuaded that his opinions on great subjects had been maligned; and that if, unhappily for him, the disease of our epoch had disturbed the health of his soul and made science an instrument of scepticism, this would only be a transition to a higher faith.

It is impossible to analyse the complex sources of personal influence, and I will not pretend to

say what it was in Hyle that charmed and subjugated me. All I can say is, that I was charmed, and that by the time tea was over we had grown spiritually intimate, and had ranged over a great surface of questions. Latouche, bringing me a collection of drawings of the nervous system of various animals, exclaimed—

“Look at this, Guest. This is the sort of fiddling work over which Hyle wastes precious time, calling it psychological research. I see your astonishment, but the fact is so.”

Guest. If Mr Hyle does think so, I am sure he has excellent reasons; though by your tone I gather either that you are bantering, or that you do not think the reasons valid.

Hyle. Latouche, as I need not tell you, is an ingrained sceptic. His mind is in a constant state of oscillation from one opinion to another, from one point of view to another. The consequence is, we never agree, because he never for long agrees with himself.

Latouche. Go on! Give your picturesque imagination full scope, and having drawn a caricature, proceed to prove that such a figure is ludicrous. That is the way with disputants. I shall appeal to Mrs Hyle.

G. But what is your objection to these drawings?

H. He objects to what he scoffingly calls the “creeping study of facts,” in questions so awful as those of the soul. The study seems to him a sort of profanation of the great mystery. The scalpel vulgarises psychology, he thinks.

L. I do, and have never “oscillated” on that point.

H. To me it has long appeared that the most reverent as well as the most rational attitude of mind, in this as in all other questions, is

a patient submission to whatever the facts disclose. The real profanation of the mystery is a glib readiness in logical formulas, arranging to its entire satisfaction what the soul *must* be, and pretending to an intimate familiarity with that which is declared to be a mystery.

G. May not our friend consider that facts about the nervous system of animals, however useful in themselves, are a little too removed from the lofty questions of psychology, and in this sense justify his epithet of "creeping study"?

H. I have long learned to disregard the warfare of epithets as no better than the yells with which savages seek to terrify their antagonists. Give me only the facts, and any one may brand them as he pleases; he may scorn them as "creeping," and applaud his own guesses as "soaring," without protest from me. I quietly quote Wordsworth:—

"Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop
Than when we soar."

L. Facts! facts! that is the noisy cry of to-day. Every one, of course, has the highest respect for facts, but thinks that nobody else has got hold of them. Now, on the great psychological questions, it is my belief that no one has got many facts—certainly not you, Hyle; nor on your method will you ever get them.

G. Be serious, Latouche. I am very anxious to hear Mr Hyle expound his method in his own way.

L. Take care: he'll unmask all the batteries of science upon you—you'll get nothing but materialism from him.

H. If we are to discuss such subjects, let us avoid the misleading epithets which rough-and-ready

disputants are too fond of employing. I object to your disposing of my views as "materialism," because that word *connotes*, as Mill would say, opinions I disapprove of, and thereby carries with it a false impression of my views. There is too much in the writings and sayings of many writers grouped together under the term materialists, both in spirit and particular conclusions, that I disavow and think erroneous, for me to consent to hear myself classed with them, and not protest. You, Latouche, are an ardent theist; yet, because you reject the orthodox doctrines of the Church, you would by the indiscriminating vulgar be styled an "infidel"; you would repudiate such a term, because it *connotes* much more than the rejection of certain doctrines. Over and above this rejection, it *connotes* the upholding of certain specific opinions which you do not hold. When, therefore, the term "infidel" is applied to you by the ignorant, you simply regard it as the indiscriminating classification of ignorance; when applied by an adversary, you regard it as a polemical brickbat; from a friend who knew your opinion, you would regard it as an insult. I say the same with my "materialism." I do not expect the vulgar to draw nice distinctions, and from them I can bear the term without a protest. It is otherwise from thinking men. While candidly avowing my total disbelief in any spirit as the *noumenon* of consciousness, I hold myself responsible only for my own opinions, and not for the opinions of all who may agree with me in this simple negation of spirit.

G. It is eminently agreeable to me, Mr Hyle, to hear you thus emphatically repudiating the hateful doctrines of materialism, so disastrous in their consequences.

H. Pray do not misunderstand me. What I repudiate is not the hatefulness, but the errors of the opinions to which I allude. Whenever a materialist expresses opinions which I believe to be true, I join with him against the world. As for the disastrous consequences, . . . I simply disbelieve in them.

G. What! can you consent to accept doctrines so repugnant to our best instincts, so destructive to the very basis of our moral and religious convictions? Can you consent to embrace a cold and cheerless creed which robs us of our faith in immortality? The feeling of every rightly constituted mind must revolt against such conclusions, and in that revolt there is the evidence of their falsehood.

H. What if I were to say—and it would be true—that my mind revolts against the opinions you have just expressed, and that my revolt is an evidence of their error? Familiar as I am with those phrases, I cannot hear them without pain. It may be justifiable in orators to enlist the feelings of the audience, and by them advance a cause; but in seekers of truth such arts are unworthy. Great is the scandal to philosophy that illustrious men should so often have permitted themselves to stigmatise a theory on the base ground of its being repugnant to their feelings, when all their energy should have been given to a destruction of its evidence. The vulgar, of course, argue with their feelings; the semi-cultivated do so, and take pride in doing so, giving themselves an air of virtue in what is really a disloyalty to truth. But for truth-seekers to endeavour, by sophistications and declamations beside the question, to resist the plain conclusions of logic, is a scandal we should all deplore. Repugnant to the feel-

ings? Ah yes! Christianity was very repugnant to the feelings of Jews and Romans; hence Golgotha and the nine persecutions. Galileo's doctrine was repugnant to the feelings of pious astronomers and cardinals. Geology was dreadfully repugnant to Christians. Truth in its novelty is inevitably repugnant to the feelings which have long clustered round the old error. Nor can any belief, wise or unwise, long continue without gathering round it many of our clinging feelings, which are hurt when an attempt is made to unwind them. All this I know, and this makes me tender of disturbing any rooted belief until I am assured not only that the belief is erroneous, but that it is injurious. Such hesitation, however, applies only to the promulgation of new views, not to their intellectual investigation. In the region of philosophy you admit that opinions are to be estimated by logic, not by sentiment?

G. Certainly; and yet I would have sentiment also obtain a candid attention. It often warns us of a precipice at the end of our path.

H. It often imagines precipices. It can and does shriek out, "Don't go that way; there is danger." But having never been that way, it has only its terrors as evidence. Now you are well aware how little this kind of evidence is worth. Fear is a summary logician. Get up a cry of "mad dog," and the terrified mob never pauses to ascertain whether the dog is mad, but stones him at once.

G. Do you then wholly disregard the warnings, vague though they may be, which in advance condemn certain opinions? Does not the mere fact of their contradiction to what you know is the truth, assure you that the new opinions have some lurking fallacy,

although you may not detect it otherwise than by this result?

H. When a new opinion contradicts established truth, one of two presumptions is legitimate—either the new opinion is erroneous, or the contradiction is but apparent. In the first place, we must detect and demonstrate the error; in the second, we must seek out the source of the seeming contradiction.

L. Ah yes! this is easily said. Suppose, however, that we cannot detect the error, and suppose the contradiction is irreconcilable?

H. Even in this difficult case our course is plain. Allegiance to truth demands that we should accept and hold fast to every opinion which is guaranteed by evidence, whether we can see the reconciliation of contradictions or not. We know that no truth can in the nature of things really contradict another truth; and we must leave it to happier minds or future generations to connect and harmonise what now seems antagonistic. The utmost influence that should be allowed to any contradiction of established opinions is the *presumption* that the novelty is erroneous; and this presumption will lead to rigid scrutiny. If, after all our scrutiny, the new opinion still carries with it an air of cogency not to be gainsaid, we are bound to accept it until it be logically disproved. Do but consider for a moment, and you will admit that it is pitiable weakness in a thinking man to reject—or even wish to reject—an opinion simply on the ground of its being repugnant to our feelings. No one has had the courage to proclaim that the feelings are, or ought to be, the final arbiter in philosophy; no one has proclaimed sentiment to be the organon of research.

L. I don't know that. At least

I know that men daily act as if such proclamation had been made. They employ all the ingenuity of the sophist, and all the windy insincerity of the rhetorician, in trying to darken the evidence, and to dissuade hearers from listening to the evidence, on the avowed principle that the conclusions drawn from that evidence are detestable, and dangerous to established convictions. Satisfied with their opinions, they don't want them to be disturbed. The attempt to disturb them is resented as an injury; and the disturber gets hard names, if not hard treatment, for his pains.

H. Truth has no holiness for such men. They baptise their nursery prejudices with the name of instincts; they call their doctrines "noble" and "consoling," and implore you not to doubt, lest you lose all consolation. They are orators, not truth-seekers.

G. I admit this is a general weakness, and is found in men otherwise earnest and humble. Yet, without defending all the tactics of alarmed conservatism in the presence of insurgent novelties, I cannot but believe, and suppose you also believe, that there are opinions lofty in tone and consolatory in their consequences—capable, therefore, of elevating the moral and intellectual nature of man,—on which ground, if on no other, we should do our utmost to preserve them; whereas there are opinions which have a grovelling and degrading tendency, so injurious to man's higher development that we are called upon to crush them if possible.

H. I admit it. But pray observe that it is the trick of each party to employ what Bentham calls "question-begging epithets," and by them to impose on the unwary. Each party praises itself and dispraises its adversary. Each

claims to benefit humanity; and each is doubtless sincere. There are lofty opinions and grovelling opinions; but no opinion can be lofty which is false—no opinion can be beneficial which is erroneous—no opinion can be degrading which is true.

G. Yet I cannot rid my mind of the conviction that a doctrine may be judged by its consequences—or at any rate, that the fact of its leading to certain false and hateful consequences is a warning of some error somewhere.

L. A warning? yes; but is there not a singular laxity in the deduction of dangerous or absurd consequences? I find men daily resisting political or commercial changes on the ground of danger; the new measure will lead to this and to that—and how horrible that would be! The unintimidated reformer pushes on, carries his measure, and we are obliged to confess that it doesn't lead to any of those fatal consequences against which we had been warned. Children and savages are reckless of consequences; old women—of both sexes—think too much of them.

G. You do not seriously pretend that foresight of consequences is not an important part of philosophy?

H. I think Latouche means that in seeking truth we must not seek a foregone conclusion, nor swerve from our path lest it *may* lead to a marsh; just as, in acting uprightly, we must not pause to ascertain whether the consequences of our action will be directly and immediately beneficial or hurtful to us. Fixing our mind on consequences, it may often *seem* to us that what is honest, what is just, may also be very disastrous, and that a slight deviation from the

direct path may lead us to a happier result. Fixing our minds on duty, such deviations are seen to be ignoble in themselves, and the sources of much scoundrelism. That men who see unpleasant consequences ahead should falter on the path of duty, is unhappily but too intelligible; but how base in a philosopher to teach that such faltering is virtuous! In one who pretends to seek truth, to love it with all his soul, and who burns to teach it, how ignoble to urge men not to examine evidence, not to investigate particular paths, because they lead to unpleasant and unpopular conclusions! I cannot express to you the deep disgust with which I heard that distinguished charlatan, Victor Cousin, implore his audience not to believe in Condillac, because the doctrines of Condillac were inconsistent with liberty, as Cousin understood it. "Messieurs," he exclaimed, appealing to their patriotism, instead of to their reason, "*vous aimez ardemment la patrie. Si vous voulez la sauver embrassez nos belles doctrines. La statue de la liberté n'a point l'intérêt pour base, et ce n'est pas à la philosophie de la sensation et à ses petites maximes qu'il appartient de faire les grands peuples.*" This is the genuine accent of the rhetorician. Believe my doctrines, not because they are true, but because they are patriotic, according to my views of patriotism. Let us save our country by a moral doctrine, and let us seek that doctrine in "*cette philosophie généreuse, si honorable pour l'humanité, qui professant les plus nobles maximes les trouve dans notre nature, et qui nous appelle à l'honneur par la voix du bon sens.*"¹ Here are question-begging epithets! Is it not de-

¹ Cours de l'histoire de la philosophie.

plorable? Imagine an astronomer imploring his audience not to accept the Copernico - Newtonian system because it abased the dignity of our earth, consequently of man, and because both religion and common-sense assure us that the earth is immovable — which is a doctrine “so honourable to humanity”! Imagine a chemist urging his pupils to embrace the more generous ideas of the alchemists which gave man a greater power over the elements! Imagine a physiologist declaiming against the degrading tendencies of a theory which made life depend on the presence of certain proportions of nitrogen in the food, and of oxygen in the air! It would be too absurd for science: it is not too absurd for philosophy. In science men seek for ideas which are the true expressions of the facts: in philosophy they too often avow that they seek “generous” ideas which are “honourable to humanity.”

G. I hope you do not suppose that the inflated rhetorician whom you have just instanced is a fair representative of modern philosophy.

H. By no means. I should be sorry to compare the serious thinkers to such a brilliant but hollow professor. I take him, however, as an exaggeration of a very common tendency; and I say, that so long as we tolerate the principle of estimating doctrines by their consequences, so long as we admit feeling to be an arbiter in questions of intellect, these exaggerations, and worse, will be rife.

G. I will not defend every absurdity that may shelter itself under the principle, but I cannot entirely give up the principle. If I see a man building a magnificent house in a marsh, I am bound to warn him of the danger of malaria.

He does not rightly answer my objection by pointing out the solidity of the timbers, the excellence of the brickwork, and the admirable architectural dispositions. I say, Don't build there, because there is malaria all round, and your children will perish miserably.

H. If your opinion of my house were delivered from the medical point of view, it might be acceptable; but if it were in answer to my request that you should pronounce on the solidity and convenience of the architecture, it would be beside the point.

G. Beside *the* point, but surely not beside the larger interests involved in your children's health? When a moralist points out the dangerous consequences of a doctrine, is he not justified in disregarding the smaller for the larger interest?

H. Your illustration is an apt one, yet I will venture to say that it meets my views equally well. The land is marshy round about my house? Very well: thanking you for the information, I proceed to drain the land, not to knock down my house. Perhaps this bit of land, with all its disadvantages, is the only solid bit of earth to be had; and if I am to build at all, I must build there. What am I to do? Build well, and drain the marsh. I prefer this labour to erecting my house on a quicksand, simply because of its wide prospect and the broad sky above.

L. Nay, you might meet him thus: “My dear sir, you vehemently assert that if I build on that spot my family will perish from malaria. Are you *sure* of that? I doubt the fact. I know how you alarmists reason from your terrors. Prove to me first that malaria exists there, and *then* I will see if the marsh can't be drained.”

G. We have been led away from the particular question into a debate on the general question. To return, let me ask you if you think it possible that the principles of materialism can be adopted without at the same time shaking the foundations of ethics and religion?

H. As a matter of fact, the answer simply is, that many good and pious men have been and are "materialists," as you would call them—that is to say, have not believed in any spirit inhabiting the body. As a matter of argument, the answer simply is, that unless the foundations of ethics and religion rest on a theory of the soul, they cannot be disturbed by a refutation of the theory. You will not assert that ethics and religion grew out of the hypothesis of man having within him a separable entity, nor that they stand and fall with the evidence for such an entity?

G. Assuredly not. Yet it seems to me that the spirituality of the soul is so intimately connected with all our most cherished doctrines, that to disturb the one is to disturb the other.

H. They have grown into connection in later times; but the early Christians were all materialists, which proves that the connection is incidental, not vital. Ethics and religion have their roots elsewhere, appeal to other data, are justified by other evidence. The first object of all investigation is truth, and not the concurrence of one doctrine with another. Let the truths of the several sciences and philosophy be established, their concurrence must follow. But no truths can be established by our seeking only those opinions which flatter our convictions on other points. It is philosophical suicide to attempt the control of our search for truth

by fears of the consequences to which any truth may lead. Remember the emphatic words of John: ἀληθεία δεῖ προσκυνεῖν Θεόν.

There was a brief silence. Mrs Hyle with womanly tact broke off the discussion when it was about to become disturbed by feeling, and proposed that we should stroll on the sands in the moonlight. We all gladly accepted; and in a few minutes the long slow wash of the advancing tide stealthily crept up to our feet as we paced the firm sands, still conversing but no longer disputing.

The calming influence of the scene was felt by all. Hyle was peculiarly impressive as, with his serene conviction and unaffected seriousness, he dwelt on the beneficent influence of close and reverent study of nature, which constantly kept alive the deep sense of mystery, yet as constantly fortified the mind with the sense of a living reality. He confessed to me that he had for many years relinquished metaphysical studies, because they appeared to him hopeless, and declared that in his old days of metaphysical speculation he had never felt the placid contentment and sweet resignation which accompanied the healthy activity of scientific research. There was something unsettling and feverish in metaphysics. Man's arbitrary arrangement of the universe according to the *a priori* method was so opposed to the quiet acceptance of the facts as nature revealed them, and allowed the egotistic impulses so wide a scope.

I could not agree with him. I envied his serenity, and confessed that it was not mine, but could not agree with him that man's personality had a more obtrusive interference in metaphysical than in scientific research. The living reality of mind, I said, was quite

as persuasive as the living reality of nature. Without saying so, I was convinced that the blissful peace which had descended upon his soul was owing to the fact of life having given him one of its greatest blessings, a perfect love. With such a wife, metaphysics

would have been to me what science was to him.

On taking leave of them at their door, I gratefully accepted their invitation to join them on the morrow and renew our discussion. That night I slept but little.

II.

All the next day my thoughts were running on the conversation with Hyle. I blamed myself for not having properly sustained my own positions, for having omitted to bring forward arguments which would have met those he advanced; but still I felt, that from some want of penetration on my part he had the best of the argument, although his views were essentially wrong. I stated this frankly to him in the course of the evening. Without pretending to answer his arguments respecting the impropriety of judging opinions by their consequences, I was unable to accept them, to take them up into my conviction. Vaguely yet strongly I felt that profound truth, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Mrs H. Charles thoroughly agrees with you there. But he thinks that we are all too ready to assume that doctrines we disavow *bear* the fruits which we arbitrarily graft on them. He says that a bunch of grapes handed to us on porcelain would lose none of its flavour if handed on a cabbage-leaf, and that in general the dreaded consequences have no more necessary connection with the doctrine than the grapes with the cabbage-leaf.

G. But all doctrines must lead to *some* consequences. The grapes grew on a vine. Now I cannot help thinking that the physical hypothesis of the soul carries with it very different consequences from the metaphysical hypothesis; and that if, for example, we believe in

immortality, we must from that height pronounce the physical hypothesis false, because it saps the very foundation of our belief in immortality.

H. You have chosen a strong case; but let us look a little closer. You decide that the physical hypothesis is false because it leads to a false conclusion; but *does* it necessarily lead to that conclusion? It *may* lead some minds there, but does it by logical necessity end there? Moreover, does the metaphysical hypothesis by logical necessity lead to the conclusion of immortality?

G. To both questions I must answer Yes.

H. To both questions I must answer No. You have said, as many have said before, that the physical hypothesis saps the foundations of our belief in immortality. But consider for a moment whether you ever thought that the foundations of your belief rested on *any* hypothesis of the soul—whether you ever meant that the doctrine was deduced from the metaphysical hypothesis, even should it have been confirmed by such an hypothesis? Are they not wholly independent views? Do they not belong to very different orders of conceptions? Is not the one a matter of faith, and the other a speculation of philosophy which can neither take from nor add to the peculiar evidences of revelation?

L. This may silence Guest, but it does not answer me. All who

believe in revelation want no philosophical foundation for their hope in immortality; though many of them, with unwise restlessness, are constantly quitting this secure stronghold, and trying to gain the auxiliary of philosophy. But for me, and thousands like me, the immortality of the soul is a rigorous consequence of its immateriality.

H. I think that a fuller consideration will convince you that the doctrine of immortality is based on *other* grounds than a hypothesis as to the nature of the soul, and that on these grounds alone it is to be accepted or rejected. The Christian can have no higher authority than his Bible. The theist has nothing but his instinctive belief; and *this* surely does not involve any hypothesis, material or immaterial. With the Christian it is a dogma; with the theist a hope: with neither is it a matter of knowledge.

G. True. Yet the revealed Word may be confirmed by the teachings of philosophy; and at any rate, every revealed truth discloses the falsity of every doctrine which opposes it.

H. Excuse me if I again insist that on this point there is no opposition between revelation and materialism. As far as the Bible declares anything at all on the nature of the soul, it declares it to be material.

G. Is this a paradox you are putting forth to test our wit?

H. Far from it. That it should for a moment sound paradoxical is owing to the fact that in modern times the physical hypothesis has been generally—by no means exclusively—held by men who rejected the doctrine of immortality. That there is no radical antagonism is seen in the fact of spiritualism being a modern hypothesis. Most

of the early Christians were materialists. It was not until the fourth century that spiritualism began to be taught by the Church doctors. I cannot pretend to the theological erudition necessary to decide the meanings to be affixed to the exact words of Scripture, but it is enough for my argument that unhesitating believers in Scripture should for centuries have understood the soul to be corporeal. It is not needful to go as far as Priestley, who looks upon the introduction of spiritualism “as an introduction of heathenism which has greatly corrupted Christianity;”¹ and I am only called upon to point out that there is no necessary antagonism which should prevent the Christian from being a materialist. Let us assume for a moment that the physical hypothesis is true, it will not be proved untenable by any contradiction it may afford to Scripture. Read Priestley’s fifth section, entitled, “Advantages attending the system of Materialism, especially with respect to the doctrines of Revealed Religion.”

G. Really you must excuse me if I say you have chosen a very unfortunate example. I am not directly acquainted with Priestley’s writings, but I know enough of him to know that he was very far from orthodox, if he was not absolutely an infidel.

H. Like many other earnest reformers, Priestley has been much calumniated. However, his character is not here of importance, and I will not discuss it. You may rest assured that he was a sincere believer in the Bible and in immortality. It was on that ground I cited him. Since you demur, I will cite another and a quite unexceptionable writer—Isaac Taylor. In his ‘Physical

¹ Priestley’s Disquisition on Matter and Spirit, p. 31.

Theory of another Life,' that acute and excellent man says that the immateriality of the soul should be treated as a merely philosophical speculation, and "unimportant to our Christian profession." He examines the explicit teaching of St Paul, "who speaks of the laying down a body that is gross, or at least infirm, perishable, and ignoble, and the taking up a body that shall be potent, illustrious, and permanent. For aught we know, there may be a pure immateriality, or an absolute separation from matter; and moreover, some such state of sheer incorporeity may perhaps await the human race in some stage of its progress towards its ultimate condition. But no abstraction of this kind is either affirmed or implied in the passage before us; nor does it enter St Paul's argument even by so much as a passing allusion, or a solitary phrase thrown in to save a collateral truth."¹

L. Guest is silent; I cannot be so. If you have made out a case for the Christian materialist who believes in immortality without respect to any hypothesis of the soul's nature, you have not touched those who believe in immortality because they are convinced of immateriality. Our position is this: Matter cannot think, *ergo* the thinking principle is immaterial. If it be immaterial, it will not vanish when the material envelope disappears. This is clear, irresistible. Now look at the other side: If mind be only a function of the brain, it cannot persist after the brain is no more. The brain once decomposed, its elements scattered, and entering into the formation of new substance, how can its function survive?

H. Excuse me, Latouche, if I say that this ancient argument is

vitiated by very surprising assumptions.

L. Very likely; only, as I and others are quite blind to them, perhaps you will couch our eyes?

H. Assumption the first—"Matter cannot think." In common with all philosophers, you confess an utter ignorance of what matter is, affirming that only its phenomena can be known; and yet you have no scruple in declaring that this matter, the nature of which is impenetrably hidden from you, *cannot* be this, *cannot do* the other. I call upon you to prove, or show cause, why matter cannot exhibit the phenomena of thought. There can be no such proof.

L. I think there can be and is abundant proof.

H. It would be a great gain to philosophy if such proof were furnished. Assumption the second—"An immaterial principle must be immortal."

G. I cannot regard this as an assumption.

L. Nor I; it follows as a rigorous deduction. Matter is mortal.

H. Question?

G. We apprehend your objection; you would refer to the indestructibility of matter? But when matter is said to be mortal, all that is philosophically asserted is, that material bodies are composite and decomposable, whereas immaterial bodies are simple and undecomposable. Is not that your meaning, Latouche?

L. Perfectly. The function, or force, of any composite body dependent on the co-operation of several elements, necessarily disappears with the disintegration of that body into its elements. But mind is the function of an undecomposable spirit: it will persist as long as the spirit persists. Will any one maintain the extravagant

¹ Taylor's Physical Theory of another Life, p. 9.

proposition that elementary particles of matter cannot be destroyed, but that elementary spirit can be destroyed?

H. You do not apprehend my objection. I questioned your assumption, because I found it issuing from total and avowed ignorance. You admit that we can know nothing of spirit, and then proceed to affirm propositions which could only be justified by precise knowledge. Before we can affirm that spirit is necessarily immortal, we must know what spirit is.

L. Not necessarily. The conclusion may be a coerced conviction. Observe: the belief in immortality is instinctive. Whether philosophy can justify it or not, we *must* believe in the doctrine. Now I say that, starting from this certitude, if we attempt a rational justification, there can be no issue but in spiritualism; for it is a sheer impossibility to conceive the soul to persist after the body's disintegration, if the soul be nothing more than a function of the living body. You cannot have a disembodied function, any more than you can have locomotion without locomotives.

Mrs H. May I venture to suggest that the discussion is turning—as usual—upon a misunderstanding? We all believe in immortality. Charles also believes it in his way, though his idea of it is rather that of a persistent *influence* than of a persistent *existence*. The question now is, not whether the belief be justifiable, but whether an ampler ground of assurance can be found in the hypothesis of the soul adopted by the immaterialists? To this Mr Latouche replies it can. Charles thinks that, inasmuch as we are in fatal ignorance of what matter is and what spirit is, we can draw *no* assurance from *either* hypothesis; and that—as far as

the doctrine of immortality is concerned—it is supremely indifferent which hypothesis be adopted.

L. Then why does he care so much for his physical hypothesis?

H. I care for it, in the first place, because it is the only one I can distinctly conceive; and in the second place, because it enables me to study psychology on that method which alone has been fruitful in results in other sciences.

L. *Voilà son grand mot lâché!* You see, Guest, how we have come round to our starting-point of yesterday, and how Hyle justifies his interest in poking about the nervous system of animals, which is to enlighten him on psychology. As if there *could* be a science of the soul!

G. Do you doubt it?

L. Greatly, profoundly, unhesitatingly! I have had too many headaches over bulky treatises not to know that many worthy (and misty) men imagine that such a science is not only possible, but is to be found completed in their octavos. Would you have my definition of this science? It is, a dense mist which vaporously fills the compartments of a terminology.

G. Be serious.

L. Well, then—there will be a science of psychology when the eye can see itself.

H. You might as well say, "There will be a science of vision when the eye can see itself." We may admit that the soul cannot know itself except through its phenomena, but it can have no other knowledge of matter; and the great question now urging itself on attention is, whether we cannot have a science of mental phenomena studied on the same general method, and subject to the same criteria, as all other sciences of phenomena?

G. I venture to go further, and

to declare that, so far from assenting to the almost universal verdict of philosophers respecting our inability to know anything of the nature of the soul, I believe they have been too precipitate. It is clear to me that *all* our knowledge is not purely phenomenal, but, on the contrary, that we know the soul *directly* and as a *noumenon*.

L. This is a daring affirmation!

H. You interest me extremely. If you can show any grounds for the belief that the nature of the soul is accessible, you open a new field of research.

L. Look at your husband, Mrs Hyle. How he pricks up his ears at the first sound of a paradox! Guest gravely informs him that he is going to show how a man can jump so high as to leave his skin on the ground, and with equal gravity Hyle prepares to see the feat performed without jugglery. In spite of the admitted axiom that knowledge is in its essence phenomenal,—limited to phenomena,—these two are about to inquire how things can be known *per se*.

Mrs H. Why should you not listen gravely to a grave argument?

L. Oh, I will be as grave as a parrot, if you wish it. I will look on while Guest attempts to compress the fog into a solid, though I know beforehand that the utmost he can wring from it is a little dirty water, useless to man or beast.

H. As the discussion must penetrate to the very foundations of knowledge, and will therefore occupy some time, I shall propose that we first have tea.

L. By all means; and, Mrs Hyle, if you could quietly flavour my cup with a little brandy, it might fortify me for the coming trial.

During tea, Latouche rummaged

amid the books scattered about, and slowly collected a small stock, which he placed beside him. When the tea-things were removed, Mrs Hyle took up her needlework, and Hyle produced a box of cigars. "*Ex fumo dare . . . Guestem!*" said Latouche, as he bit the end off his cigar. "Now, I'm all attention."

H. The various theories accepted among psychologists are all determined by one of two assumptions, not always distinctly avowed. The first of these assumptions is, that the soul and its phenomena are removed from the criteria of physical inquiry by their essential difference from physical objects; in other words, that the soul is in its essence a different *noumenon* from the *noumena* which underlie material phenomena. The alternative assumption directly reverses this, and affirms that the various phenomena grouped together as psychical, are indeed different from the phenomena grouped as physical; but this difference is *only* phenomenal, without any radical *noumenal* distinction.

L. There is a third assumption, if you please, and one which evades the difficulties of both the others. It is this: the soul is in truth distinct as an *essence*, and its phenomena are essentially distinguished from all and every physical phenomena; but, inasmuch as it is conjoined with a physical body, and manifests itself only through bodily organs, we must relinquish the quest of what it *is*, and study only its manifestations.

G. This seems to me reducing the soul to a mere postulate. It is materialism with a spiritualistic preface.

H. It hampers physiological research with the clog of a gratuitous and unknowable entity, which must either be set aside because practically inoperative, or if included as

an operative factor, must be a disturbing element wholly incalculable in its *modus operandi*. As Mr Guest remarks, the assumption is materialism with a spiritualistic preface, and a preface is not a book.

L. You are both wrong. Do you not see that it is a compromise between two extreme opinions, neither of which is consistently tenable by itself?

H. A compromise, perhaps, and, like most compromises, a mixture of illogicality and flattery.

L. Whom does it flatter?

H. The timid, inducing them to yield their frontiers to save the kingdom; and the politic, inducing them to waive their pretensions to the kingdom till they have secured the frontiers. All compromises are opprobrious in science.

L. Very well; reject my compromise—which, please to observe, is the reigning doctrine—and I reject both your assumptions as untenable.

G. I agree with Mr Hyle that there are only two logical positions, but they both seem to me to rest on an anterior assumption. It will be impossible to decide on the truth of either, so long as we permit the pestilential fog now overhanging the subject—

L. Guest declaiming against fogs—a sight to be seen!

G. I allude to the metaphysical doubts respecting the nature of knowledge. There is a unanimity in error which is surprising, distressing. In all the schools, we hear a chorus—sometimes despairing, sometimes jubilant—with the unvarying burden of “all knowledge limited to phenomena.” Differ as they may on a thousand points, they all agree in this, that we cannot know matter *in itself*, but only in its *appearances to us*; we cannot know mind *in itself*, but only its *manifestations*.

L. As true as Euclid!

G. As questionable as Pyrrho!

H. You interest me by the doubt.

G. Let us first ask, how is knowledge possible?

H. Nay, let us rather ask, how is *certitude* in knowledge to be ascertained?

G. Its basis must obviously be consciousness. We are *compelled* to acknowledge the validity of the test of consciousness. Whatever else we may doubt, it is impossible to doubt that. Therefore—

L. Not too fast! Don't run on from one position to another before the last is secured. I am not prepared to admit the unimpeachable veracity of consciousness.

G. You are not?

L. For the best of all reasons—I very often find it unequivocally erroneous in its affirmations.

G. And pray, what is it which affirms the error? To prove the mendacity of consciousness, you must invoke the aid of the very consciousness you declare untrustworthy.

L. Yes, yes; I know the logical legerdemain by which philosophers bewilder us. But just as a puzzled spectator is unable to say how the conjuror makes it appear that a rabbit turns into a purse, yet in spite of his puzzlement is doggedly convinced that the rabbit remains a rabbit—so, in the face of all the metaphysicians, I remain convinced that consciousness is very fallacious, and I often find its testimony false.

H. Let us attempt a reconciliation by giving more precision to our terms. When Mr Guest says that the principle of certitude must be drawn from consciousness, we cannot demur. It is saying, in other words, that if there is a principle of certitude in knowledge, it must be in the knowing mind.

L. Which I take to be a very unfructifying truism.

H. But we cannot maintain that all the ideas or testimonies to be found in consciousness are true; and the principle of certitude must be one which discriminates the true from the false. The great source of disputes is the careless confusion of two very different kinds of certitude. There is, first, the *certitude of sensation*, which is rigorously confined to individual consciousness—as when I affirm that a peculiar substance is sweet to my taste, although to another's it may be bitter. All such affirmations are irresistible. When I am conscious of cold, or when I see an orange, it is quite possible that, measured by a thermometer instead of my feelings, the external temperature may indicate heat, and that the orange which I see exists only in my hallucination; but in these cases the *affirmations* of consciousness are strictly true—it is the *inferences* respecting external objects which are erroneous. The *certitude of corroboration* is another criterion extending beyond that of simple consciousness. The inference is one respecting the correspondence between internal and external facts, between the changes in consciousness and the causes of those changes. Here consciousness deserts us. We must seek another basis. Where can it be found? In the consensus of other minds—in the corroborating consciousness of our race.

G. Do you admit, then, the existence of an impersonal reason controlling and correcting the deficiencies of individual minds?

H. Yes and no. I admit it as an abstraction, otherwise I should deny that there was a logic. But this impersonal reason is only the collective name for that corroboration of individual consciousness just alluded to. The distinction between an opinion and a certainty arises from the corroboration in

the one case being partial, in the other universal. When I affirm that this fruit is sweet to me, I affirm an absolute truth; when I affirm that it is sweet to all healthy palates, I do so because the corroborating affirmations of millions of healthy beings assure me that the correspondence between the change in my consciousness and the external cause of that change is not a correspondence limited to my individual organism, but is one equally related to all human organisms. In this consensus lies the degree of certitude. We see this illustrated in daily life. If I have any doubt respecting the reality of an inferred cause of my sensation (I never doubt the reality of my sensation itself), I appeal to a bystander to know whether the external object affects him in the same way. Should he and others assure me that I am mistaken in my inference, and that what I take to be a robber levelling a pistol is really only a leafless tree, I acquiesce. In the same way, if I have formed a chain of inferences—that is, a theory—to account for some physical or moral phenomenon, I appeal to others for their corroboration. Should they fail to see the connected chain of truths as I see them, it is a proof either that I have misinterpreted some of the evidence, or that I have failed to present it in such an order before them that they also must see it as I do. I may be firmly convinced that I have seized a great truth, even though none agree with me; but this is because I am convinced that if the evidence could be placed before them as it is before me, they too would see as I see. This conviction is often as great a delusion as that which exists in hallucinations of sense.

L. Then, according to you, *vox populi, vox veritatis*?

H. Undoubtedly, in all questions

wherein the *populus* has a legitimate claim to be heard. The moment I step beyond the affirmation of my own consciousness, and assert that not only do I *feel*, but also *know* the cause of the feeling, not only has a change taken place within me, but I can assign its correspondence with some external fact: the moment I take this step, I have lost my secure ground of individual consciousness, and must rely on that of others. If they likewise affirm what I affirm, I am assured that there is a very high degree of probability (in many cases amounting to irresistible certainty) that the asserted correspondence exists.

L. I have heard you often say that the criterion of truth was the impossibility of steadily conceiving its negative.

H. I say so still. Why do you rely on the truth of your present sensations, except that it is impossible for you steadily to conceive those sensations to be now other than they are?

L. And yet you rest certitude upon the corroboration of others. When all mankind believed that the sun moved round the earth, there was ample consensus, according to your argument, for absolute certitude; yet we know that mankind was in error.

H. There *was* ample consensus, and there *was* certitude. In what respect has modern discovery, while proving the error, invalidated the testimony of consciousness? Men affirmed that the sun moved round the earth: they were as certain of it as they could be of any complex series of external relations removed from direct appreciation. Closely examined, their affirmation amounted to this only: the sun seems to move round the earth, and it seems so to all men. This is a certainty which no improvements in science

can shake. No sooner was a doubt started respecting the accuracy of the inference, no sooner were other facts of seeming found to be incompatible with this inference, no sooner had a new interpretation of all the facts of seeming been placed before the meditative mind, than a new *certitude of inference* was substituted for the old, but the old *certitude of affirmation* remained. It was impossible to steadily conceive the negation of the proposition: "The sun *appears* to revolve round the earth." But it was possible very steadily and distinctly to conceive the negation of the proposition: "The sun *does* revolve round the earth."

G. Is there in your views anything opposed to my position of the necessary veracity of consciousness.

H. Not if we define it more rigorously. The opposition between you and Latouche is, that you too absolutely affirm the veracity of consciousness without specifying the principle of certitude, and he too restrictedly affirms the fallaciousness of consciousness without recognising a principle of certitude.

L. And that principle is?

H. The principle of the *coercive positive*, which not only affirms, but permits of no negative being steadily and distinctly conceived. Every logical act is the predication that something *is*—this is positive; it is coercive—*i.e.*, forces itself on the mind as true—when it admits of no contradiction. When I feel, it is impossible for me to conceive that I am not feeling; when I have multiplied two by two, it is impossible for me to conceive the product as different from four; when I have once distinctly conceived two parallel lines, it is impossible for me to conceive that, so long as they continue parallel, they should ever meet; when I

have ascertained the relations of an acid to a base, it is impossible for me to conceive that, under precisely similar conditions, the union of acid and base will not always be a salt. And so on throughout the range of knowledge we find that all truths, the most abstract no less than the most concrete, rest on this principle of the coercive positive, and that an opinion has in it a nearer approach to certainty in proportion to the difficulty of steadily representing its negative to our minds—it becomes absolutely certain only with the absolute inconceivability of its negation.

G. I fully admit what you say, but cannot at present see where begins our point of divergence.

H. It begins with the passage from the sphere of *knowing* to the sphere of *being*.

L. Mrs Hyle, do you hear him? Your husband is actually becoming transcendental. He will be Low Church next!

Mrs H. Charles won't be frightened away from an opinion by any epithet. You must attack his logic if you wish to arouse his fears.

H. My meaning is simple. In all knowledge whatever, there is reduction of the relations known to elements of consciousness. Whether we assume that external objects and their relations are known mediately or immediately—*per ideas* or *per se*—the final condition of all possible knowledge is a state of consciousness.

G. Agreed.

H. But thus far consciousness only discloses its own states. It affirms what is its state; but it says little or nothing of existences beyond it, except that they *correspond* with its changes, are directly related to them. Whenever we frame propositions respecting the external order, it is obvious that we are only combining the ele-

ments of our consciousness, and transferring them to the outer world; we infer that the external order corresponds with the internal order—that the relations disclosed between objects and ourselves are revelations of the nature of the objects *per se*, unrelated to us. In one word, seeing that we can only know not-self through the modifications of self, is there any valid ground for believing that the external world corresponds with our conception of it?

L. None whatever.

G. None.

H. Well, I think there is valid ground.

L. And it is?

H. The fact that we do believe it, and cannot help believing it.

L. Oh! oh! I give up all suspicion of your transcendentalism after that.

G. Probably I form a very imperfect conception of your views; but it seems to me that if, as we are agreed, the principle of certitude must be restricted to the direct affirmation of consciousness, and if, as we are also agreed, the external world can only be known to us through its modification of our consciousness, then two conclusions seem rigorously to follow. First, that the clear affirmations of consciousness are absolutely true: second, that our knowledge of objects is not the knowledge of noumena—of things *as they are*; but of phenomena—of things *as they affect us*. Are we thus far agreed?

L. Quite.

H. Not quite. I should be sorry to interrupt you, beyond recalling the distinction between an affirmation of consciousness which may or may not be true, and an affirmation which *must* be accepted as true—the positive of which the negative is inconceivable.

L. That distinction is surely implied in Guest's phrase (borrowed from Descartes) "*clear affirmations*."

H. It was the remembrance of the many errors into which Descartes and his followers were led by the assumption of all clear ideas being necessarily true, which made me at the outset venture to qualify it. However, if Mr Guest will kindly proceed.

G. Consciousness in affirming its own existence—*cogito, ergo sum*—necessarily affirms the correlative existence of an external world. In the *cognition* of self there is a *recognition* of not-self. In the consciousness of a change, some cause of that change is implied: the fact of a sensation brings with it the necessity for some object which determines the sensation.

L. But although consciousness of self implies a not-self from which it is discriminated, it does not imply any knowledge of *what* the not-self is.

G. True. We know the *manifestations* of an outer existence; we cannot know what underlies those manifestations. To know this *per se*, we must of course know it unrelated to ourselves, which is clearly impossible. As Kant says, "The conception of a noumenon is simply a liminary notion—*Grenzbegriff*."

L. I agree entirely; but my position as sceptic forces me to point out the uncomfortable conclusions to which this philosophy leads. While by the law of thought we are compelled to believe that the phenomena we know are manifestations of something which exists, by the same law we are compelled to avow that this something—this noumenon—cannot be known, and therefore *for us* does not exist; it is only the manifestations that exist for us.

H. I wish to enter my protest

in passing. I will not at present enter upon the grounds of my protest; they may be disclosed hereafter. Enough if I now say that if, as philosophers are agreed, ideas are representative, it follows that they represent reality, and that the order in the relations both of co-existence and succession which the mind of man discovers, is not a mere *figment* of his, but a *finding*, and it exists where it is found.

L. This may have some profound meaning; but frankly, I cannot understand it. Nothing seems more satisfactory to me than the arguments by which philosophers prove that we clothe the object known in the colours of the knowing mind. We steep it in consciousness, and it comes out dyed with our colours. In short, all knowledge is a state of consciousness, all certainty a state of consciousness; the whole universe is nothing but panoramic modes of our Ego, and idealism is the thin and shadowy refuge of philosophy.

G. By no means.

L. By all means. There is no escape—except in scepticism, whither I retire. What is Matter? The schools tell us—that they cannot tell us. What do we *know* of it? We know that it is solid, extended, coloured, and so forth; but these are not the several modes in which matter exists, they are the several modifications of our consciousness. All we know is limited to changes in our consciousness; and the unknown, unknowable cause of these changes we call Matter. And what do we know of Mind? Again it is simply the states of our consciousness. We know mind under the phenomena of feeling, willing, desiring, thinking; but *that* which feels, wills, desires, thinks, we cannot know.

G. Denied.

L. Deny it as loudly as you please, the fact remains. Although

compelled to believe in the existence of a something which manifests itself to us in mental phenomena, we can only know the manifestations. As Sir William Hamilton puts it, in the passage I have marked here, "Mind and matter, as known and knowable, are only two different series of phenomena or qualities; mind and matter, as unknown or unknowable, are the two substances in which these two different series of phenomena or qualities are supposed to inhere."¹

H. Allow me, Latouche, for one moment to call your attention once more to the contradiction into which you and many eminent philosophers have fallen. You start with the axiom that matter and mind are both equally and inevitably unknown, unknowable. In the next breath we find you establishing another axiom—that mind is essentially *different* from matter. How do you know this? How can you pretend to predicate the qualities of an unknowable substance?

L. I have an answer ready here in Hamilton's pages. "The existence of an unknown substance," he says, "is only an inference we are compelled to make from the existence of known phenomena; and the distinction of two substances is only inferred from the incompatibility of the two series of phenomena to inhere in one."

H. And this answer satisfies you?

L. Perfectly. Where do you deservy the flaw?

H. In the assumption of incompatibility. This acute thinker actually implies that a substance, which he admits to be necessarily unknowable, is nevertheless so well known that he can decide what does and what does not belong to it. Surely, before we can decide what

is and what is not compatible with the nature of a substance, we must know something of that nature?

L. Well, yes—I give up Hamilton; but I return to the charge, and say that, granting the existence of some reality which underlies the phenomena of mind and matter, we have no possible knowledge of it. Now I understand you, Hyle, to say that we have some knowledge of matter over and above its manifestations; and you, Guest, to say that we have some knowledge of mind.

G. I assert that we have the unequivocal attestation of consciousness for the belief in the reality of mind and in its essential distinction from matter. But it is true that many writers have singularly misinterpreted this testimony. Although the primary declaration is of a self distinguished from not-self—and thus both existences are affirmed and distinguished—yet our knowledge of the two rests on different bases.

L. Disclose them.

G. We know self directly, absolutely. The not-self is known only by implication, indirectly, relatively; it is an inference from an affirmation of consciousness, not the direct affirmation itself. When the idealist denies the existence of an external world, he contradicts the clear attestation of consciousness, which declares the existence of not-self in its affirmation of self. When the realist declares anything beyond this, and assumes that we can know more of the Not-self than the changes it produces in consciousness, he confounds inference with knowledge.

L. For the life of me I cannot see how, on your principles, scepticism is escaped.

G. There is no danger so long as we uphold the direct *noumenal*

¹ Lectures on Metaphysics, vol. i. p. 138.

knowledge of self, as distinguished from the indirect phenomenal knowledge of not-self.

L. Ay, but how prove this?

G. The soul knows *itself as it exists*; it knows the *external world as that world exists in relation to it*. Consciousness affirms self, and confirms not-self. But I will not now enter upon the exposition of views which would carry us deep into the night. Perhaps on some future occasion I may task your patience and good-nature. Meanwhile, I should so much like to hear Mr Hyle expound his novel conceptions relating to our knowledge of the external noumenon.

H. That also would, I fear, lead us deep into the night, and would probably not be worth the candle. Briefly, however, I may say that, just as we are compelled to believe in the existence of an external reality as the objective cause of our subjective states, so we are compelled to believe that all those fundamental relations which we discover among phenomena, and which form the bases of our science, have a corresponding reality in the nature of things. The principle of certitude assists us here. I know that a sensation has some external cause, because the corroborating testimonies of thousands assure me that they likewise have the sensation, and assign it to an external

cause. Something of this corroboration is attained when I find mathematical laws applied to the explanation of physical phenomena. I am assured that there must be realities of time and space, when I find the nicest calculations of astronomical events founded on such realities. It does not follow that I should know what time and space are, nor what force is, nor what substance is. Enough if I know that they exist as realities—that the relations I have discovered among them are *representatives* of their actual relations.

L. Come along, Guest; I shall get no sleep to-night if I allow my brain to set working on problems so abstruse as these!

G. Nay, I would willingly forego sleep to hear Mr Hyle continue.

L. Nonsense! he'll only muddle your wits. Stick another cigar in your mouth, and come along. Am I not right, Mrs Hyle? Won't it be best for all of us to stop the discussion here? Guest is insatiable; but if you will ask us to tea to-morrow, we shall be much better prepared.

Mrs H. Come, by all means, to-morrow; but you need not hurry away just yet.

L. I will stay twenty minutes longer, on the understanding that not another word of metaphysics is to be uttered by any one.

III.

I reached home that night more and more puzzled, more and more interested in Hyle. He had not said much; but there was in his manner, and in the occasional glimpses he disclosed of his mind, something so peculiar, and so extremely unlike my previous conception of him, that although I feared the danger of his conclusions, I was completely fascinated, and longed to hear him fully ex-

plain his views. I intimated as much to him on the following evening.

H. I fear we shall come to no agreement, standing as we do at the antipodes. You believe in the metaphysical hypothesis—the soul is for you a special *entity*; whereas I cannot concede it otherwise than as a *function*, or group of functions, having the vital mechanism as its organ.

G. Such conceptions are indeed antipodal. That they could possibly have been maintained by earnest intellects, is a proof that there exists on one side or the other some powerful fallacy, something which masks the truth.

H. I will not be so presumptuous as to say that I have detected this; but the history of my course of thought may possibly disclose the origin of my error, if I err.

I had for many years rejected the metaphysical hypothesis, regarding it as a remnant of an antiquated philosophy which obstructed the advance of knowledge. To be frank, I will confess that I could not, without impatience and something of contempt, read the old, old arguments with which it is customary to defend that hypothesis; nor can I even now overcome my amazement at the complacency with which many trivial reasons and glaring assumptions are advanced as convincing arguments. But at that time, if in turning over the leaves of a new work I found the writer was a spiritualist, it was usually enough to make me shut the book at once. In avowing that hypothesis, a writer had given me his measure.

G. Then you will not now fling at spiritualists the reproach of refusing to read materialistic books, and of doing their utmost to dissuade others from reading them?

H. Excuse me. If the spiritualist prejudges the question, and closes his eyes against evidence because he dreads the conclusions, I object to such conduct as disloyal; but if he has no fear of consequences, and has already examined the evidence which failed to convince him, I regard his unwillingness to read works which only repeat the arguments he has examined or the evidence he has rejected, as a legitimate economy

of his time and patience. No busy man willingly reads the refutations of Newton which from time to time appear. He considers that question settled. But no honest mind refuses to read such refutations from a fear lest Newton should be refuted. No man ought to object to another for reading them. No man ought to shut his ears against some new evidence. If I could learn that any one had pointed out the radical defect of the physical hypothesis, or could establish the probability of the metaphysical hypothesis upon any grounds with which I was not already familiar, I should eagerly listen to him.

L. (*laughing*). Of course, of course. We all say that. Who is there that does not pretend to have a mind open to argument?

H. Why, those who warn the public against believing certain doctrines because they lead, or are supposed to lead, to unpleasant conclusions. For myself, I can conscientiously say—and she will confirm it [*pointing to his wife*]*—*that I did eagerly seek for light in the direction most opposed to all my convictions.

L. How came the busy man to waste time thus?

H. I was one day trying to understand how, in the present condition of culture, so many great intellects could believe in the soul as a special entity, when a ray of light suddenly shot athwart the obscurity, rendering plausible, nay probable, what had before seemed so absurd. A thrill of surprise ran through me at this glimpse of the long-lost clue. At that moment it seemed as if I stood at the entrance of a new path which would lead me far away from the home of twenty years. A revolution in all my views seemed imminent. It was a curious emotion, you may imagine,—a tremulous eagerness,

suffused with the pleasure of discovery, mingled with the hesitation of doubt.

L. And some little soreness of self-love?

H. None, believe me. All who have undergone such revolutions will testify that they bring no pain. People imagine that the relinquishment of old convictions must necessarily be accompanied with pain. But it is not so; the delight in novelty overcomes the false shame of admitting we have been in error. The strength of truth triumphs. The exquisite gratification felt in the presence of new ideas acts like a tonic. At least so it was with me. "More light, more light!" was my urgent cry. I sought that light in prolonged meditation, and in the works of great metaphysicians which I re-read with intense interest. For a time I did my utmost to be passive—open simply to the reception of the arguments, that I might thoroughly appreciate them,—keeping in abeyance all the hesitations and suggestions which would every now and then surge up from the source of old convictions. My earnest desire was to follow the new track, and see what could be said for the metaphysical hypothesis, before venturing to challenge its details. If ever a man sought to find out the strongest positions of his adversaries, I did. But this did not last long. The light flickered as I moved. Instead of gaining more light from the works of metaphysicians, the darkness gathered, and I was forced to retrace my steps and recover my original starting-point. While thus wavering I began to write an essay.

L. Before you had come to a conclusion?

H. In order that I might come to one. Like many other students, I have adopted the plan of keeping

my wandering thoughts within a definite circle by shaping them in an essay. This may be owing to a native defect in my power of concentration—it may only be the result of habit; but I find that I can never think clearly and consecutively upon a subject until I begin to write upon it. The pen marshals the scattered thoughts. To show you how completely judgment was suspended on this occasion, I will quote a sentence from the opening paragraph of my essay: "If our inquiry leads us, as it probably *may*, to the metaphysical solution; or if it leads us, as it probably *will*, to the physical solution,—in either case we must accept the result wholly without reference to consequences, admitting no objection which is not founded on the logic of the case." In writing that sentence, I declare to you that I had no certainty as to which would be the final conclusion,—only a presumption in favour of my old views.

G. This is extremely interesting, and to me, who have no such experience, it is difficult of comprehension. I gather, however, that you wrote yourself into a positive conviction. Might one ask the favour of reading that essay?

H. It exists among my papers, but is in such a chaotic condition as to be unfitted for any one's eye but mine.

G. Can you tell us why you rejected the hypothesis of an immaterial entity residing in the material organism?

H. I rejected it on many grounds, which, however, you would probably refuse to acknowledge. There is one argument which alone suffices. It is, that the hypothesis is not only discarded by the test of certitude—the coercive positive—but is open to the objection of not being distinctly conceivable, only verbally expressible.

L. Whew!

H. The test of a true proposition is, that it so completely harmonises with known facts as to coerce our conviction, and renders its negation inconceivable. We may verbally express a negation of the truth of anything—*e.g.*, we may say that an external world does not exist; but we cannot distinctly conceive the non-existence. Now it is obvious that we can very easily conceive the negation of such a proposition as, "The soul is an entity *sui generis*." We can easily conceive the soul as a process; nay, whenever we become acquainted with the facts which are to be harmonised by our proposition, we cannot conceive it otherwise than as a process.

G. Excuse me if I say that we can, and do, so conceive it.

H. Look closely, and you will see, I think, that the proposition of the soul being an entity essentially separable from the material organism is one which may be verbally announced, but cannot intellectually be conceived, any more than motion can be conceived as independent of moving bodies.

G. I now detect the reason of your objection to my principle of certitude—the clear affirmation of consciousness—and your desire to replace it by what you consider a more precise definition. But here, as in so many other questions of psychology, we lose in largeness what we gain in convenient clearness; we lop away a quantity of excellent material in order to give a handier shape to what remains. Now it appears to me that philosophers have precipitately admitted several suicidal arguments, simply because they have been enamoured of this logical precision of definition. Had they left consciousness a little more indefinite, they would have found in it evidence which would have justified their beliefs.

But fixing their aims on clearness, conceivability, cognition—as if definite cognition were coextensive with consciousness, instead of being one factor only—they have been brought into manifold and manifest contradictions.

L. Come, come, I can't allow this. If you pretend to discuss questions of philosophy, and at the same time demand that we should give up our organon—which I take to be logic, which again I take to be synonymous with clearness—there can be no hope of agreement. Whenever you find yourself getting worsted in the fight, you can conveniently shroud yourself in the indefinite, as the gods in Homer snatch away their defeated *protégés* in a mist.

G. You may banter.

L. I'm not bantering; I'm quite serious. I only stipulate for clearness.

G. And I only object to your denial of whatever is not clear. The world does not end at your vanishing-point of vision.

L. Perhaps not,—but vision does; and it is of vision that we are treating.

G. Allow me to unfold my position; you may attack it then as fiercely as you will. It is absolutely necessary that I should vindicate the validity of consciousness, because on its decisive revelations my system—if system it can be called—finds justification. We have to discover what are the fundamental disclosures of consciousness, and these I take to be six:—

FIRST DISCLOSURE.

"The fact of existence. Whether the existence be noumenal or phenomenal, permanent or transitory, the fact itself admits of no dispute—consciousness *is*."

L. Very luminous!

G. Be patient.

SECOND DISCLOSURE.

"The various manifestations of this existence are accompanied by a feeling—more or less defined, according to the greater or less development of consciousness,—a feeling, I say, of self. The first disclosure is one of indefinite existence; the second is of definite existence—consciousness has become self-consciousness."

L. Do you mean that consciousness can exist dissociated from self?

G. I mean that there may be sensibility without the more complex feeling of self. Mr Hyle, as a physiologist, would express the same idea by saying that there may be nervous action (sensation) without cerebral action (thought). It is probable that self is latent in the earlier undeveloped stages of consciousness.

L. I imagine that a cat never mistakes itself for another, although it probably never says "I."

G. Do you not perceive that the idea of "another" can only exist as the correlative of "self"? But I waive the point. The distinction is to me unimportant. Let us fuse the two states into one, and say that the primary disclosure is one of self-consciousness. This apperception (to use the phrase of Leibnitz) of our own existence is an ultimate fact. It cannot be explained; it must be accepted. As Sir William Hamilton says, "The apparent enthymeme of Descartes, —*cogito, ergo sum*,—if really intended for an inference—if really intended to be more than a simple enunciation of the proposition that the fact of our existence is given in the fact of our consciousness—is either tautological or false." He adds that philosophers have found the evidence in a clear immediate belief in the simple datum of consciousness; and he thinks it would

not be difficult to show that this was also the opinion of Descartes.

L. Of course it was. Descartes, in his replies to Mersenne, says so explicitly.

G. Let us proceed, then, to the

THIRD DISCLOSURE.

"In the consciousness of self, there is given at the same time the inevitable correlative, not-self. We cannot distinguish our own existence without in that very act affirming the existence of that from which we are discriminated."

H. Are you not by the phrases "distinguish" and "discriminated" indicating far more complex states than the simple condition of consciousness?

G. I think not. Self and not-self seem to me—may I not say to all philosophers?—the two terms of one conception, indissoluble as the ideas of the two ends of a line, or as the concave and convex surfaces of a curve.

H. This is the general opinion. But can you not conceive a being so organised as to be deficient in the ideas of space or *outness*? With two senses less, we should be incapable of such ideas. Yet, with no sense of sight and no sense of touch, we should have many psychological experiences—we should have all the many changes of consciousness which would arise in hearing, smelling, tasting, and in muscular and visceral sensations, which, however, would convey no suggestion of outness, would give no intimation of any objective existence.

G. This is new to me. I must ask time to consider the objection maturely. At present I feel disposed to reject it, because I cannot resist Kant's arguments, which prove space and time to be forms of thought.

H. I think Kant failed to distinguish between space and time

as conceptions, and as realities or objective relations, which existed between bodies, and were represented in consciousness under the forms of space and time.

G. I will not argue the matter just at present, but, if you allow me, will proceed to the

FOURTH DISCLOSURE.

"In the affirmation of self there is the unequivocal affirmation of a noumenon—a substance which underlies all the phenomena of consciousness, and must not be confounded with them."

L. Is this meant in opposition to Hume's doctrine, that self is nothing but a *succession* of impressions and ideas?

G. It is. Hume gives logical unity to consciousness, and denies real unity; whereas, it seems to me, the reality is implied in the very fact of impressions and ideas: there is something which is impressed,—something which feels, which ideates. And Hume is forced to express this truth in describing impressions and ideas. Turn to the passage, Latouche; it is in the 'Treatise on Human Nature.'

L. (*reading*). "An impression first strikes upon the senses. . . . Of this impression there is a copy taken by the mind which remains after the impression ceases; and this we call an idea."

G. Now, not to criticise the preposterous psychology of this passage, with its hypothesis of the mind as a copying-machine, let me only point to its contradiction to his famous assertion that the mind is "nothing but a *heap* or *collection* of different perceptions united together by certain relations, and supposed, though falsely, to be endowed with perfect simplicity and identity." He might as well say that a locomotive was nothing but a succession of spaces passed through, and on this definition deny the ex-

istence of a motor—deny that there was any real object passing through spaces.

H. Hume's language—and I fear his conceptions also—wanted precision on this matter. He was convinced that the mind was not a substance, but had not made clear to himself the alternative that it might be a process.

G. One moment. When I look at one object and then rapidly look at another, each in its turn entirely occupies consciousness; but between these two states there is an interval, however brief, in which no object occupies consciousness. Does consciousness vanish during this interval? Does it perish to reappear? Is there no continuity of existence uniting these two states? Surely the consciousness continues to *exist* although it ceases to *manifest* its existence—it is in a static, not a dynamic condition—during this interval.

H. Your question might puzzle the followers of Hume; but we, who conceive the consciousness as a vital process, have a simple answer. We say that just as a muscle continues to exist in the interval between two contractions, so the nervous mechanism, of which consciousness is a function, continues to exist in the intervals between two states of consciousness, but that neither contraction nor consciousness can be manifested if their organs are injured or destroyed.

G. The error of this conception seems revealed in the

FIFTH DISCLOSURE.

"Not only does consciousness affirm its own existence, and affirm it as noumenal, persistent, but, in its discrimination of self from not-self, it authentically discriminates mind from matter."

I say that the abstract and indefinite correlation of self and

not-self is authoritative of the concrete and definite correlation of soul and body. I know that *I* am not my body, with the same assurance that I know my own existence. The conscious principle is within my body, is affected by it, and affects it; but it is unequivocally distinguished from it. Every one says "*my* body," and thereby separates the *me* from the body. Language, which is the register of universal experience, thus confirms philosophy.

H. I fear that no solid argument can be got out of the fact that we say "*my* body," since we equally say "*my* soul."

L. Well put. It is precisely the difficulty which has bewildered me. There is something preposterous in the notion of the soul separating itself from itself, and looking at itself as an object. Jumping out of one's skin is a trifle to it: we are here supposed to be jumping out of ourselves. One of you physiologists turned an animal inside out, and made the stomach do duty as a skin, and the skin as a stomach: but psychologists go further; they project self from out of self, and then inform us what the projection is like! How impatient they have made one with their subject becoming subject-object!

G. Your impatience is excusable; yet, if you will allow me to advance the sixth disclosure, it will perhaps throw some light on your difficulty and Mr Hyle's objection.

SIXTH DISCLOSURE.

"Knowledge of the not-self must necessarily be phenomenal and mediate, since external objects can only be known through consciousness. But knowledge of self is essentially different. It is noumenal, immediate, direct. It knows itself."

L. Is not this metaphysical heresy? Philosophers, as far as my reading extends, all agree that the soul cannot know itself: it can only know its phenomena,—that is to say, it can only know itself by becoming an *object* of cognition, and *that* is a phenomenon.

G. Unless I am mistaken, this is the fundamental error of the schools. Certainly it is not thus that consciousness testifies. Examine your own, and you will find that knowledge of self is distinguished from knowledge of not-self precisely at this point—namely, that self is known directly, and not-self indirectly. I know myself as I exist; other things I know only as they affect me.

L. But this knowledge of self, what is it but a *state* of consciousness, a *manifestation* of the Ego, consequently a phenomenon?

G. In classing the phenomena of consciousness with the phenomena of objective existences, we improperly employ the same word to express very different relations. The phenomena of objective existences are the manifestations of those objects, their appearances to us. The phenomena of consciousness *are* the consciousness itself, and not *appearances* but *modes* of being.

L. I do not understand you.

G. Consciousness does not *underlie* its manifestations as a noumenon underlies phenomena; it is those manifestations, it exists in them, they are it. To make my meaning intelligible, let me substitute the phrase "*vitality* and its phenomena." You will admit that vitality is only the various vital acts in which it is manifested; it is not a something underlying those acts. You admit the existence of a vital principle distinct from the organism.

L. Not we; we both deny it.

G. For the sake of our illustra-

tion, let it be admitted. Well, this vital principle manifests itself in various acts which are by us recognised as its phenomena—they are the appearances of the principle to us; but to the vital principle itself these acts are not appearances—they are its modes of existence: strip it of all such modes, and you reduce it to non-entity. Precisely analogous is the case of consciousness. That mental principle *is* its manifestations. It is a diamond of many facets, variously reflecting lights: these facets are not separable from the diamond, although *as* facets they may be few or many.

L. I see your drift. With the soul, according to you, being and knowing are one.

G. Is it not universally acknowledged that the *essence* of the soul is consciousness—in other words, that consciousness makes up the very nature of what we call soul? If this be so, how can we doubt that the soul knows itself—knows its own essence—since that essence is knowledge?

L. As Hyle does not answer your question, let me put in a word. I cannot at once disentangle the fallacy which I feel to be involved in your exposition, but I will ask you to explain how the soul becomes an *object* to itself? how consciousness can know itself? what image of it can be formed? We only know things or relations by classing them as *like* or *unlike* things and relations already known. Now the soul, as a noumenon, cannot be so classed. It can be like nothing but itself. It must become an object of perception before it can be known.

G. Thus argue the schools, and they falsely argue. There is indeed an embarrassing *equivocal* in our use of the word *knowledge*, which, because it includes a mass of cognitions derived from percep-

tions, is often supposed to be limited to these. But lower than these are the fundamental facts of consciousness—namely, the intuitions, which are *undecomposable states* of consciousness, and which, because undecomposable, are ultimate facts admitting of no explanation, consequently of no refutation.

The knowledge which the soul has of its own existence is one of these intuitions. Kant, and many others—misled, I conceive, by the vicious metaphor of an internal sense viewing the phenomena of consciousness as the external sense views objective phenomena—have attempted to class our knowledge of self with our knowledge of not-self; and thus, by placing both on the same footing, have continued to support the old error of the soul's incapacity. But let us thrust aside this metaphorical screen—let us look directly at the disclosures of consciousness; we shall then be convinced that the soul has nothing like an internal sense contemplating illusory phenomena passing *before* it, but that the soul *is* the phenomena, and its changes are simply the soul passing from the statical into the dynamical condition—the statical ceasing altogether at each moment of becoming dynamic.

L. I doubt whether I understand this; but it seems to me that you are giving an elaborate expression to Hume's simple proposition, that the mind is only the succession of impressions and ideas.

G. The ambiguity of language may make my doctrine sound like Hume's, but there is an essential difference between them. Hume makes impressions and ideas the successive appearances of an illusory existence. I make them the successive transformations of a real existence, indeed the *only* existence authentically known to us—*i.e.*,

known in an intuition which admits of no question. All other knowledge is mediate, indirect; *this* is direct, immediate. If any knowledge is possible, this of my own existence must to me be the most certain.

L. Why don't you answer him, Hyle?

H. I wish Mr Guest thoroughly to expound his views without unnecessary interruption.

G. But you silently disagree with them?

H. Nay—much that you have said seems to me unanswerable *on your premisses*; and we must leave the discussion of the premisses till another occasion. Meanwhile Latouche, who professes the scepticism which results from constant oscillation between opposite principles, ought to be ready with his objections.

L. Well, to begin. As far as my reading extends, all philosophers are opposed to the notion of the soul's direct knowledge of itself. Beginning with Aristotle, and ending with Hamilton—the Scotch Aristotle—there is a series of independent and very various thinkers, all of whom agree on this one point. Aristotle, in several places, is careful to explain that the mind knows itself only in knowing other things,—which view has been reproduced in the aphorism, "Mind only knows what it *does*"—never what it *is*, being of course implied.

G. I understand Aristotle differently. His remark is limited to the *νοῦς*, which is not coextensive with soul, *ψυχῇ*. The whole of his speculations rest on the assumption that the soul *can* be known and *is* known as a noumenon.

L. Do you suppose this was the sense in which the schoolmen understood it? Listen to Thomas Aquinas when he says, "The intellect considered in its essence is an intelligent power; hence of itself

it has the faculty of understanding, but not of being understood except inasmuch as it acts."

G. How did Thomas Aquinas know what the soul was in its essence if he could not know it in its essence?

L. How?

G. Yes; on what did he ground the distinction between its essence and its acts?

L. Well, I suppose by distinguishing the unknown from the known.

G. Nay; he assumes the essence to be known.

L. Oh, I am not going to fight the schoolmen's battles, nor indeed to defend any one. My purpose in alluding to the array of authorities against you was simply this: If those who have most profoundly studied the subject have all agreed on the radical incompetence of the soul to know itself as an essence, any one like yourself who brings forward a different doctrine is bound to show wherein lay the error of predecessors.

G. This is by no means indispensable. The positive enunciation of a truth negatives all that opposes it, without requiring other aid. I am not bound to explain how any man lost his way if at the end of his day I show him that he has lost it.

L. Very well, show us the error.

G. In the present case, I think we can recognise the wrong turning which misled philosophers. The scepticism which disturbed their confidence in the existence of an external world—which argued that our knowledge of this world was necessarily phenomenal, so that, however firm our belief in the existence of an objective reality, our knowledge of it could only be a knowledge of our own modifications,—this scepticism, I say, led by a verbal confusion to the conviction that our knowledge of

self must be equally phenomenal. Because the object could only be known as a subjective state—i.e., as a phenomenon—men assumed that the subject itself, when an object of knowledge, necessarily partook of the phenomenality of objects. But I deny that the soul ever does become an object *to itself*. Your soul may become an object to me, but never to itself. The object as a phenomenon is not the reality of which it is the appearance—it is simply the modification of our consciousness. Can you say this of the soul? Can you say that here the phenomena known are not the knowledge, but modifications of something else? In other words, is a mental phenomenon the *reality* of consciousness at that given moment, or only an *appearance* of consciousness to something else?

L. It is an object to the Ego—whatever *that* may be.

G. I hold that the phenomenon *is* the Ego under that modification. How can it become an object different from the Ego?

L. There is the puzzle. I constantly ask how philosophers represent to themselves the conception of the Ego as an object to itself.

G. Such a notion implies that there is something underlying the Ego—a consciousness of consciousness—a mysterious *I* before which the *me* appears! What absurdity!

L. Yet how can the Ego know itself?

G. How can anything know what is *different* from self? Believe me, all such questions are idle. No ultimate fact admits of explanation. Aristotle would tell you that to seek for such explanations would show a certain weakness of the reasoning faculty—*ἀπωρία τῆς ἐστὶ διανοίας*. Every explanation is the reduction of a fact to some more general fact; and as we proceed in this reduction, we must finally arrive at the

fact which is irreducible, which admits of no explanation.

L. But I have yet to learn that you have proved consciousness to be an ultimate fact. What say you, Hyle?

H. The answer to that must be determined by your agreement or disagreement with Mr Guest's premisses. I have already intimated that I think Mr Guest's position impregnable on his assumption that the soul is not a process but an entity. Once grant that the soul is an entity, a noumenon, and then, since consciousness is the essence of this noumenon, there can be no alternative but the conclusion that the soul's knowledge of itself is the soul actually existing under that state.

G. Wherein lies the defect in my premisses?

H. It would lead us too far to discuss that question just now. Let me, in answer to Latouche, add, that if consciousness is not the essence of the entity, but only one of its phenomena, philosophers are justified in assuming that the entity itself lies beyond knowledge; but in that case, their assertion of the soul being a special entity is unphilosophical,—and for this reason: it is an assumption without warrant. All the phenomena may more rationally be classed as successive relations of the organic structure.

L. Explain.

H. All psychical phenomena are manifestations of *some* existing substance, are they not?

L. Certainly; but their substance is not the organic substance of our body; it is a special, spiritual substance, which exists in the body and acts through the bodily organs.

H. This is asserted, but it has never been proved. I will go further and say, it cannot even be *thought*. It is verbally expressible,

but utterly unthinkable. Nor is this all. Considered closely, it amounts to much the same as the materialist doctrine; for it makes the soul a succession of phenomena whose underlying reality is excluded from knowledge, and can claim no higher warrant than the unknown unknowable reality which underlies organic structure: whereas Mr Guest, with finer logic, keeps aloof from all such confusions. He vindicates the integrity and speciality of the soul-substance; he gives coherence to his views by the one postulate of consciousness constituting the essence of the soul.

G. Your appreciation gratifies me extremely; and all the more, because I will confess that you have thrown light upon my position which I had not seen before. It had not occurred to me that to claim a noumenon for the soul which was separable, *in esse*, from consciousness, was to claim for it no more than is claimed by materialism,—was, in fact, to make the soul, in all we know of it, in all we prize, a mere succession of perishable phenomena, leaving as a permanent existence nothing but that unknown *x*—that mere postulate of substance, which, for any interest we can have in it, may as well be matter. Indeed you have shown me, that according to the metaphysical conception recognised in the schools, the soul, supposing it to exist hereafter, would be *wholly* different from that complex of consciousness which is known to us. It would exist indeed as an entity; but not at all as we know it, consequently not as the existence we yearn to have continued. It would not be the dear self, but a drear abstraction—not the living soul, but a new being.

L. Yes, I admit that Hyle has

forced this very unpleasant conclusion upon us. Nevertheless I cannot see my way out of the difficulty of the soul becoming an object to itself. That it is such an object I take to be certain, if there is any knowledge of it. Do we not stand aloof, as it were, and contemplate the Ego, like an external fact?

G. How do we contemplate an external fact? Is not the act of contemplation simply one phase of the soul? In an act of consciousness, an external object has been brought into relation with the Ego—a perception is excited. So long as that perception endures, the object *occupies* consciousness. Now when the Ego contemplates itself, the process is identical. Now—

L. Not too fast. This must be made clearer before we go farther. Have you not suffered one element of consciousness to drop out of sight? I mean the inalienable element of self, which by its constant presence affirms the existence of something underlying the phenomena, of consciousness?

G. Explain.

L. Sir W. Hamilton shall do it for me. You are aware of the emphasis he gives to the fact that in every separate act of knowledge the consciousness of self and not-self is involved. He says, "I cannot know, or feel, or desire, without knowing that I know, knowing that I feel, knowing that I desire. To feel and not to know it, would obviously be not to feel."

G. Allow me to paraphrase this slightly: Life cannot live without a life of that life—existence cannot exist without an existence underlying it. Does that strike you as somewhat absurd?

L. Frankly, it does.

G. Yet surely not more so than to say that in consciousness there

must be a consciousness of consciousness—which is a translation of the phrase, “I cannot know without knowing that I know.”

L. But listen to Hamilton: “Consciousness is thus, on the one hand, the recognition by the mind, or Ego, of its acts and affections, —in other words, the self-affirmation that certain modifications are known by me, and that these modifications are mine. But on the other hand, consciousness is not to be viewed as anything different from the modifications themselves, but is, in fact, the general condition of their existence, or of their existence within the sphere of intelligence.”¹

H. Really, Latouche, I must express my surprise on hearing this passage, so crammed with contradiction! In one sentence consciousness is made an internal eye by which the soul contemplates its phenomena; in the next sentence it loses this introspective character, ceases to be an eye, and appears as a general condition of the phenomena.

L. Well, I won't defend the language. Great metaphysician as he was, Sir William could not occasionally escape the confusions of language; but I believe his thought to be correct. Elsewhere he says, “Knowledge is a relation, and every relation supposes two terms. Thus, in the relation in question, there is on the one hand a subject of knowledge—that is, the knowing mind; and on the other, there is an object of knowledge—that is, the thing known: and the knowledge itself is the relation between these two terms.” Here consciousness is indissolubly given in the act of knowledge.

G. But no *third* element is given—there is no consciousness of the consciousness.

L. What Hamilton contends for, as I understand him, is this: If the object of consciousness is a feeling or a desire, there must coexist a knowledge of that feeling or desire: these objects could have no existence were there no *general condition of consciousness* to determine them. There must be two related terms; one of these is consciousness. It is as with the idea of a child: to form such a conception you must have the correlated idea of parent. You cannot conceive a part without at the same time conceiving the whole of which it is a part.

G. Child and parent are relative ideas. But when you tell me that I cannot think of a child without in the *same act of thought* calling up the idea of a parent, you seem to be confounding the synthesis of two related terms with the *successive* appreciation of both. So far from thinking both related terms in one indivisible act of thought, I *cannot* think of the two at once, but am forced to pass with rapidity from one to the other; and as each term occupies consciousness the other disappears. Try to see the two ends of a line in one instant of sight—you will find the thing cannot be done: the eye passes rapidly from one end to the other; each end in turn becomes vivid and becomes lost; one emerges as the other disappears.

L. I doubt the fact. Do you mean to assert that when I see or think of an orange, I do not in one act comprise its form, colour, and other qualities?

G. Certainly not in one indivisible act, but in one rapid succession of acts. There is a *cluster* of impressions all separately and successively gained, and now in rapid synthesis made to seem like one impression. When I first see or

¹ Lectures on Metaphysics, vol. i. p. 193.

think of the child, my consciousness is of an object: this object takes the form of a child in my consciousness by a successive series of inferred relations, one of which is the relation to a parent. It is thus also with consciousness of self. We say that to know and to be conscious that we know are indissoluble; but this is an after-synthesis. In the very act of knowledge the consciousness is entirely occupied with its object; in the act of feeling, the consciousness is entirely occupied with the feeling: there is no internal eye looking on—no consciousness apart from the knowledge and the feeling.

L. Yet we are conscious of knowing and feeling?

G. Not at all. We are conscious of having known and having felt. The mind passes with amazing rapidity from one state to the other, but it *passes*. We look upon the result as one undecomposable act; just as we seem to see a luminous continuous circle when several luminous points are rapidly revolved before the eye. The conception of a part necessarily involves the conception of a whole, but it does so by a fusion of states of consciousness. This *συναλοιφή*, or fusion, no more prevents the act from being composite, than the synthesis which unites various letters in one word obliterates the essential distinction of the letters. We seem to take in a word—nay, a whole sentence—at a glance, and we appreciate the meaning by what seems one act of thought. Yet nothing is more certain than that every letter is separately perceived, and its relations to the others appreciated before we know the meaning. That succession, which by us is performed

with a rapidity seemingly instantaneous, is by the child performed with slow laborious efforts; and in learning a foreign language we become aware of this. Hence I conclude that when logicians assert that the knowledge of contraries and correlatives is *one*, they are strictly accurate; but when psychologists assert that correlatives are perceived at once—both terms by one and the same indivisible act of consciousness—they are manifestly wrong.

L. Suppose this granted, what is gained?

G. This much is gained, that we disengage the phenomena of consciousness from the illusions arising out of their rapid and irresistible succession. We get rid of a figment—a sub-consciousness—an internal eye.

L. What then?

G. Why, then, we have simplified the question. We return to what I regard as the sole basis of certitude—the clear disclosures of consciousness, six of which I have already stated as fundamental.

L. I should like something more positive.

Mrs H. Is tea sufficiently positive, Mr Latouche? I have been waiting this half-hour for a pause in the discussion which would permit me to ring.

L. Tea by all means, with muffins of a metaphysical refinement, and the utmost irresponsibility of nonsense! My wits have been on the stretch so long that I feel the need of relaxation; and I shall relax myself with your dog there, which has been eyeing us with large calmness, not perhaps free from some pity. Look at the superb old fellow! The mystery of the universe troubles him but little, though the flies trouble him much.

A LADY'S RIDE ACROSS SPANISH HONDURAS.—PART II.

CHAPTER V.

THE consul's office in Amapala was a comfortable edifice, composed of whole store, half office, and half court of justice.

It was situated near the water's edge, and entered by a broad flight of stone steps. These gradients were very much the worse for wear, being persistently embroiled by detachments of the loungers of Amapala, which consisted generally of idle young lads who stuck like mussels, and peered within, and smoked and spat without, with intolerable pertinacity. A sortie made from the interior sometimes succeeded in dislodging them; but this effort on the part of the consul's clerks more usually ended in strong language and violent perspiration than in any satisfactory result. I believe an earnest hope is daily avowed, that somebody coming in may effectually clear away impediments by treading the life out of some of these human pests.

Unfortunately also for the business public, a large *ceiba* tree fronting the right side of the building spread wide its arms of dark leaves, and beneath this shade were clustered mules, water-carriers, citizens in various styles of dress and undress, water-jars, melons, and naked brown children.

The grouping certainly was picturesque. But how Consul Bahl has stood for so many years, as he has done, the nuisance of a conversation and debating club combined, held within four feet of his house of business, surpasses my comprehension.

Through a part of this assemblage I wended my way in the early morning.

ing of the day preceding that on which I was to start for Aceituna. The youths on the steps made room for me with some alacrity; and it was whispered among them that perhaps it was not so sure that Eduardo Alvarez was going with me. There had been no agreement drawn up by El Consul, they knew; perhaps the Señora would choose some other *mozo* (lad). The meaning of these remarks was simply this: Eduardo was a little in arrear for his lodgings and other matters, and unless I would advance him a part of his wages to pay his debts, he could not leave Amapala. Concerning this, I thought it well to consult Mr Bahl, and further, to ascertain whether that gentleman would recommend me to engage him.

The little white-faced clerk who had brought me from the ship was on the look-out for my visit. A curtain was drawn aside at a corner of the office a few minutes later, and Mr Bahl stepped forth. He was tall, gentlemanlike, and very kind in his manner. (The American men, all the world over, are always kind to women.) He said I had a long journey to go certainly, but I must not believe all the nonsense I may have heard about robbers, and all the rest of it. Common caution, and to refrain from travelling at dusk, were recommended.

"I sent you word last night," continued the consul, "that I cannot provide you with the mules you require here; and as for a muleteer, there is not one in the place I can recommend."

"You are sure that the custom-

house officer at Aceituna can get these?" I inquired anxiously.

"A man has gone over there to fetch some things I want from the custom-house. I sent a note by him to Mr Z. asking if he can supply your requirements. If he cannot, which I don't think likely, there is nothing to be done but to send or go to La Brea: very good animals can be got at La Brea."

"Why are they so scarce here?" said I.

"Just as it happens; there are plenty when not wanted. I hope you will cross to Aceituna though; it will save you some leagues of rough road travelling. My large boat will take you across in rather more than an hour, and you could start as soon after landing at Aceituna as you choose."

I acceded gratefully to this proposition, and then made inquiry concerning Eduardo Alvarez.

"He came down to speak to me last night," replied Mr Bahl. "I suppose he has told you that he wants a little money in advance, should you engage him?"

"Yes; he wants to pay a few little debts, he tells me. The people of the house give him a good character, and I like the lad's appearance."

"As far as I know, the lad is decent enough. Like all his race, he is apt to be idle; but really there is little employment here for a tailor, and that is the trade by which he supports himself.

"By the by," continued the consul, "as he comes from Comayagua, I certainly advise you to engage him, as you will have to take that route, and it is a great thing to secure a guide who knows some part of the country."

Then a lounge on the steps was despatched to summon Eduardo Alvarez. This youth soon made his appearance, and entered the

office with a whole train of his *confrères* peeping in at the door. A rush was made at them by the little clerk, which frustrated them, evidently, in the intention of being within earshot. A chair was handed to me, and the consul and the lad carried on a conference behind the curtain.

The result of the interview was to this effect: I was to engage Eduardo Alvarez as my servant from Amapala to San Pedro Sula; to pay him fifteen pesos (something under three pounds English money), and to allow him at the rate of a peseta (tenpence) a-day for his maintenance. I agreed to advance eight pesos, to enable him to pay his debts; and so that arrangement was concluded.

"I will draw up the regular official agreement before you start," said the consul; "it will be better for Eduardo not to be too sure of the engagement; and I must be satisfied that he does pay what he owes. Never mind about the money; I will give him the eight pesos, and you can settle with me to-morrow."

"Have you a hammock in your store?" I inquire; "it will be such a comfort in the places through which we may have to pass."

"A hammock will save you many annoyances, as you will not be obliged to rest on the horrid bed-places of the country; and the lad can look out for a verandah to sling it in. I would advise you also to take a mosquito-net. A coarse green net is best. White attracts the flies at night."

We go into the store, and I select these articles. "Then," said the consul, "you have brought your side-saddle with you, of course?"

"Side-saddle! No; I never thought of it. Can't I hire that with the mule?"

"I am afraid not here. A lady's saddle is private property, generally speaking. You may, perhaps, purchase one from some of the women about. Some one may like to make a little money. Eduardo, go out and ask among the women whether they know of any one who has a lady's saddle to sell."

As he went off Mr Bahl added, "I cannot come with you, but be sure and don't give more than twelve pesos." The lad very soon executed the consul's bidding, and in a short time were collected ten or twelve persons, declaring they all possessed the very thing. Eduardo found himself suddenly an important personage.

"Bring all of you the saddles you have to sell, and put them here," said he, indicating a vacant spot, which looked like chocolate-powder. "I must see what they are like before I advise the Señora to purchase."

Away flew the women, and in a very short space of time several very extraordinary specimens of the leather trade were exhibited. In the general excitement, the lad had overlooked me altogether, and the others did not know that I understood the idiom.

"What do you think she will pay for this?" asked one, as she held up an enormous side-saddle, which was deficient in girths and stirrup, and which burst out in all directions with lumps of hair and padding. "Say fifteen pesos?"

An indignant "*vaya, vaya*" (get along) was the only attention bestowed on this candidate.

"Here is a saddle—a splendid saddle," said another, as she clutched the article from off a boy's head, who was carrying it into the ring. "See here! real Mexican; look at the embroidery. The English lady can have it for eighteen pesos. Too much?" continued she; "no;

these English can pay. Say eighteen pesos, *mozo*, and there will be one for thyself."

Eduardo stooped down and examined this last offering. "This might do; but, see, the pommel is half broken through. Is there any way of getting this repaired?" he inquired.

"Ah, without doubt," replied the owner. "I can take it to Ignacio Gomez; he will make it all safe by *mañana*" (to-morrow).

The indefinite space of time indicated by *mañana* was known well enough to Eduardo. He might very likely see no more of that saddle for a week. He, however, said nothing to this, but assured the woman that the lady would not give that price.

"Ah, but tell her that there is no other in the place," suggested a bright spirit.

"That won't do, woman," retorted Eduardo. "The consul told the Señora that he knew there was a side-saddle belonging to the custom-house officer's wife at Aceituna."

"She would not sell it," suggested a man.

"She might hire it, though," interposed a fat woman, crowned with a bright yellow handkerchief. "No, no; the saddle must be bought here, good lad: the widow Niccoli has a woman's saddle. Wait here: I will go and look for the widow Niccoli."

She sped away, and returned with a side-saddle, it is true; but such a rag! It could hardly hold together on the woman's head.

"Yes, it wanted this and that," she agreed, as Eduardo pointed out its shortcomings. "Ah, yes, the rats must have eaten this piece of the flap, and there are no girths. Well, we will put these on. *Mozo*, this saddle will last for a little way; and then, you know, you

can buy another farther on. The English lady won't mind. They can pay, these English! Ah——"

What answer Eduardo was prepared to give to this free and easy proposition, I do not know; and as my patience was getting exhausted, and my back was beginning to frizzle with the heat of the sun, I determined to cut matters short. Walking into the circle, I said in the best Spanish I could command, "I will not buy one of these; and, moreover, I will not give more than twelve pesos for the best saddle in Amapala."

Such an interruption in most places, and with most people in any other part of the civilised world, would have called forth some excuses, or necessitated a speedy retreat, on the part of even the most hardened. Here, if the effect were electrical, it was in quite another way.

"Ah se habla nuestra idioma!" (she speaks our idiom) exclaimed the fat wretch who had proposed to cheat me so unblushingly. "Como es ella bonita, ed pequenita para una Inglesa"—(she is nice-looking, and small for an Englishwoman). The others crowded round me, some taking and stroking my hands, expressing regret that they did not know that I understood their "idioma."

It was difficult to know what to say, but I thought it right to express my surprise that they should combine to take advantage of a stranger, and that stranger a "Soltera," I added with great emphasis.

"Ah, they were sorry; they did not know; and all English have gold. No, they were wrong; a Soltera should have sympathy. But ah, they were so poor! It was so hard to live! &c., &c. Have we not to live in all countries, Señora?"

I told them I was poor too, and that to pay a fair price was all I could do. So saying, I left them, and went straight to the *posada*.

The sun was now so powerful that it was a relief to undress and lie down. Hardly had I settled for a sleep, than a thud resounded upon the outer door, the one which opened on the street.

"Who is there? What do you want?"

"It is Antonio. He has a word to say."

"I do not know Antonio. Has the consul sent you?"

"No, Señora. I want you to take me as '*mozo de mano*,' for your journey."

"Thank you; but I have engaged Eduardo Alvarez."

"Think it over again, Señora. I should suit far better. I am a man of confidence, of maturity. Eduardo is only a boy, and ah! he knows nothing. Let me see you, Señora."

"It is impossible," I replied. "I am going to rest for a few hours; I cannot talk more."

"Well, then, I return again," contested the voice of Antonio.

"No, no," I called out; "once for all, I have engaged Eduardo."

"I know the agreement has not been signed;" persisted my tormentor, "will you see me before you sign the agreement, Señora?"

"No, don't come again," replied I, in a very decided tone. There is a lingering at the door, and at length Antonio takes himself off.

"Evidently no business is private here," say I to myself, as I roll the mosquito-net round me, and fall into a refreshing sleep.

A long time after this, as it appears to me, three gentle taps are heard upon the opposite door, opening into the garden of the *posada*. This is free from pub-

lie intrusion, and I call "Come in" through the mosquito-net. Eduardo appears, carrying on his head a side-saddle. He brings it towards me, and I put out my hand to touch it. There is no question of this: it is a beautiful, nearly new, lady's saddle, and it appears to be in excellent order.

I ask Eduardo from whence he has procured this treasure?

"From the widow of the consul's brother. Señor Bahl thought of her just after you left the office, and he sent his *mozo* to see about it."

"The lady," he added, "would come and visit you, but she lives a little way in the country; and we go to Aceituna to-morrow morning."

"I am really very much obliged to the lady," I answered, as I looked at the pretty saddle of scarlet leather, handsomely stitched over with a flower pattern; "what am I to pay?"

"Twelve pesos, the sum the consul told you," the lad replied; "and, Señora, the lady is to give me a peso for carrying, and going to her. You do not object, Señora?"

"Certainly not; you have earned the money fairly. Am I to pay you now?"

"No, Señora; you are to pay to-morrow to the consul. We have to go to the office early, to get my agreement made out, I was desired to tell you. Will you go into the *comedor* (dining-room), or shall I bring you something here?"

Recollecting what was the fare on the preceding day, I elect to stay where I am, and ask the lad to bring me some coffee, and, if possible, a roll of bread with it, and some bananas. Directly after I had discussed this meal, which was all very good of its kind, I dressed and went out to

sit in the verandah on the garden-side of the *posada*.

Hardly had I sat there many minutes, when a lad belonging to the house announced that the consul's black cook wanted to see me.

"Ask him what he wants?" I rejoined. "Does he bring a note from Señor Bahl?"

In these countries, the most trifling communications between English-speaking people are always effected by note or letter. To trust to messages here would be the height of madness.

"No," answered the *mozo*; "the cook wants to see you himself." Before I could resolve whether I would receive him or not, the man stood before me.

Pulling off his cap, he said, "Very faine night, ma'am—very fa-ine. You comprehend me English?"

"Yes; what do you come here for? And, please, stand a little aside; I want all the air I can get." He smelt of fish and black man very strongly; and this, combined with a *soupeçon* of kerosene oil, somewhere near, was too much for my olfactory nerves.

"Oh ya-as, ya-as, suttingly. What I going say is very private. You go way to-morrow?"

"Yes; what of that?"

"Wa-ay, you know, you want servant, ma'am, strong, fight the way,—'sperience,—a very respectable servant, eh?"

"I have got one. Your master has made the necessary arrangements with Eduardo Alvarez. You need not take any trouble about this," I answer.

"Eduardo Alvarez. Bah! He worth nothing 't-all; poor trash—only boy in wine-shop; go about country mending clothes; he suit you!—no. Besides, Consul Bahl has not drawn out 'greement."

"That will be done to-morrow morning," I said; and, to get rid

of him, I rose to go into my room as I spoke.

The fellow, however, was too quick for me, and he planted his square, powerful frame in my path.

"Look yaare," said he; "you take me along. I sa-arve you well—good fight—good cook. It will cost you money, but I am good serva-ant, ah. I quite fit to take care of a lady."

What I should have done I can scarcely say, as there was no one that I could call, the household being all within doors, or clacking on the other side of the verandah. Most unexpectedly I got immediate and efficient aid in the advent of "Lobo," one of the dogs of the house.

Now Lobo was a very delightful little beast, and we had become great friends. He bore the character of being such a fool, that he would put up with anything. Great, therefore, was my surprise when I saw him fly towards the "captain," every nerve in his body shaking with rage.

With a yell the "captain" bounded past me, and was away down to the shore before I could speak. I had not been informed that Lobo had a special dislike to black people; and to the "captain" in particular. I felt very much obliged to the dog also, for giving me an opportunity of seeing the "captain's" good fight; the insertion of the letter "l" describes the thing much more accurately.

Once more we go to the consul's office at an early and punctual time. Eduardo meets me, arrayed in a clean shirt and a large Panama hat. Kind Mr Bahl takes me into his store, and gives me one or two edible matters, to help out the rations; amongst which, two tins of portable soup were particularly acceptable.

The boat is being got ready, and time passes, so that we are already nearly an hour late in starting.

Mr Bahl asked me if I had not been a good deal pestered by lads "applying personally" for the situation which Eduardo Alvarez now filled.

I said that there had been some other candidates, and that one of them was a personal friend of his own.

"A personal friend of mine? I have not the faintest idea to whom you can allude."

"A military character—one who has done wonders in three revolutions."

"Ah! I see now; you mean that black rascal, my cook."

"The very person. He has tormented me nearly out of my senses to take him with me," I answered.

"I wish you had told me this before,—the fat rascal. What I have done for him—for he quarrels with most of his employers—would take too long to tell. He gets good wages, very good wages; and now that he is used to the place, he wants to go off."

"I think this sort of thing is the fashion all the world over; but I should never have taken the man. I don't like him," I replied.

"When you are fairly gone, I will speak to him about his conduct. He never asked my permission, or hinted, even, that he wanted to leave," returned Mr Bahl, with great indignation.

There was not a chance of our being fairly gone yet awhile; for the boat was not in sight, and there were no preparations going on either in office or store, as far as I could see, to expedite matters. I ventured to remark that it was getting late.

"Oh yes," returned the consul; "we don't mind for an hour or so here. You will soon fall into the custom of the country. There is

no fuss and flurry, and things, in the long-run, turn out just as well. One of the boatmen has not come round, but it will all be well. Just sit down in the office, and wait a little."

So I sat in the office, and Eduardo hied to the steps, and was soon in high gossip with all the loungers in Amapala.

Another half-hour passed, and then the little clerk, seeing that I was getting impatient, came from behind his railed-off space, and informed me that the boat would be ready very soon; he had heard the boatman's voice. Would I not, in the meantime, take a glass of beer? Mr Bahl had desired him to offer it.

I was very hot, and drank the small glass of Bass's ale with relish; and I was further quite mollified on seeing the boat at the landing-place, and Eduardo pulling in the luggage. There was a good deal of delay before all was ready; but at last everything was on board, and we were seated in the boat and bound for Aceituna.

"You will not be able to get on to-day," were the consul's last words; "better stay at Aceituna for the night, and start at day-break to-morrow. Good-bye. Take care of the lady, Eduardo." So saying, the kindly gentleman turned into his office.

Eduardo showed me his contract paper as we went along. I had the original in my pocket, having signed it, as well as he, the first thing after arriving at the office.

"Mine is a copy, I know; but the consul gave it to me, because I want to show it to my friends when we arrive at Comayagua," the lad said. "I hope you will stay a day at Comayagua, Señora."

"I hope so: you will be able to go to your friends for a few hours," I replied.

"And if I serve you well, will you keep me when we arrive at San Pedro Sula?"

"That I cannot promise; but you may be sure that I will do what I can to help you. If I cannot retain you, I daresay other people will require your services."

We had now got into the open sea, and only the red roofs and tufted palm-trees of Amapala could be seen in the distance. There was a light wind, and the fresh air was most invigorating, as we skirted some mountainous land, which in some parts was thickly overgrown with brushwood and dark herbage; in others the coast was nearly bare.

The place looked so bleak and solitary, that I was prompted to ask one of the boatmen if any wild animals existed there.

"Oh yes," he replied, "there are some; *muy malos, muy malos*" (very evil, very evil).

"What are their names?" I inquired; for I thought here might prove the solution of the tiger question.

"Serpents—one or two very bad kinds—and other creatures."

"What are the names of the 'other creatures'?"

"Tigers of the mountain. Ah! I should not like to walk in that brushwood; would you, Candido?" said the man, appealing to his fellow-labourer.

I afterwards learned, from reliable authority, that what are designated "tigers of the mountain," are, in reality, small leopards. But they are fierce enough, and in many instances have taken human life. The skin of these animals is very beautiful, and forms sometimes the chief ornament of a Hondureian house.

After an hour's good rowing, the boat was turned into a narrow creek, bordered on either side with overhanging trees. This was, in a

measure, a relief from the heat of the sun, which, in spite of the awning, was beginning to penetrate through my hat. Here was little to interest us, save sometimes the having to exert ourselves in order

to keep the boughs of the trees out of our faces. The creek grew narrower, and at length a short point of land gave evidence that we were in front of the custom-house at Aceituna.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr Z., the custom-house officer, handed me out of the boat and conducted me into his dwelling. This was a low thatched house, separated only by a mound and a damp patch of grass from the edge of the creek. The entrance opened upon the principal room, which was a combination of reception and store room. The sides of the boarded walls were fitted up with tiers of wooden shelves, and on these lay packages of all shapes and sizes. Bales of cocoa-nut fibre seemed to predominate; and several layers of cow-hides made great show on the low shelves. Bushels of what I supposed to be grain, or seeds, were huddled here and there; and a great heap of white beans, and a measure on the top of it, entirely filled one corner.

The ground was the usual earthen floor, stamped as hard as iron, and depressed here and there; so much so, that it required some attention to walk safely over it.

A handsome hammock, slung from the rafters of the roofing, and a wooden table, were all the furniture of this department. For ornament there was hanging on a nail a large-sized embroidery frame; upon the canvas of this was in course of representation a very gay macaw contemplating some remarkably fine grapes. A Berlin-wool-work pattern was displayed open on a nail higher up, and thus could be seen in its entirety the magnitude of the macaw's temptation.

The custom-house officer, following the direction of my eye,

said, "*Mi sposa*,—that is her work." Somebody came to the aperture which divided this apartment from an inner one. This was *mi sposa*, a pretty Indian girl, who appeared to be many years younger than her lord, and who was followed by a still younger girl, whom she presented to me as her sister. They both wore the *nagua* costume, though it differed a little from the strict Mexican style. The *nagua* costume consists of a chemise, very fully plaited at the arms and round the shoulders, leaving the throat bare. A thick strand of hair generally furnishes the back expanse between the nape of the neck and the shoulders, and a shapely bodice of some bright colour covers the person to the waist. The Mexican girl here indulges in petticoats of various lengths till the feet are reached; but these Hondureian women were content with one short garment, comely enough, but not so picturesque; and they lacked the silver ornaments and embroidery which add so much to the "make-up" of the Mexican lady.

The beautiful eyes and shapely feet of the custom-house officer's wife, however, were attractive enough; and her cultivated voice and elegant pronunciation showed that she had received some education. I pointed to her work-frame, and asked her where she had learned to embroider.

"A la escuela, muy buena escuela," she replied (at school, a very good school); and added, in

her beautiful idiom, "my husband is English; he married me because I have had some education."

And for more than that, thought I, as I glanced at this elegant creature; but I looked very serious and practical, and remarked in reply that "education is a grand thing for everybody."

"Ah, yes," cut in the younger sister, "when it is properly applied."

I was so astonished at this remark, from such a person and in such a place, that I was startled into asking her what she meant.

"I mean that very wicked things are often done by educated people," returned the damsel, with a jerk of her head. "I have my reasons," she continued, "but I will not say more."

"Very wicked things are often done," I replied, "by people who profess much religion; we must not judge by individuals. These matters must be viewed in a broad and general way."

"No doubt the Señora is right," was the answer; "but I have my reasons. Ah, I have heard some fine tales, about people from Europe too!"

I daresay she had; but the subject dropped as the sister asked me to go into her room and take off my hat. "You will sleep here," said she, indicating the hammock with her hand, "and the *guarda costa* will look to your *mozo*."

"The *guarda costa*—what is that?"

"See here," she answered, opening the door, which had been kept fast closed for coolness' sake; "these are the *guarda costa*." (coast-guard.)

A few very fine-looking men, some in shirts and drawers, some with jackets in addition, and all bearing muskets of a very old-fashioned pattern, were walking to and fro. One of them, a re-

markably strong-looking man, kept regular pace, and tramped up and down with the regularity of a British sentinel.

Mr Z. here joined us. He said, "This is the man I propose to send with you to-morrow. Will you speak with me when you have taken off your hat? I want to tell you what I have done for the journey."

I retired with the Señora. Her bedroom was boarded off from the room we had quitted, and quite as miserable in its accommodations as the rest of the dwelling.

On returning to the outer room, Mr Z. asked me to buy the animals required for the journey, and named a price, which even I, in my inexperience, knew to be exorbitant, and said so.

"The price of mules has risen considerably," urged Mr Z.; "they are so much required in the mining districts now."

"Very possibly, but I will not buy any mules; I shall be happy to hire those you have as far as Arimesine. Mr Bahl told you in his note the price I ought to give."

There was no more to be said to this, and the wife proposed that we should go out and see the animals.

A coast-guard-man brought round a small chestnut mare, a nice-looking creature, but "weedy" withal.

"There," said the custom-house officer, "is the one I have arranged that you shall ride. That belongs to *mi esposa*; it is a great pet; *mi esposa* often goes long distances on her without attendance."

In the meadow was a very nice-looking *macho* (male mule), which was pointed out as being the one for Eduardo's use.

"Where is the baggage-mule?" I inquired.

"Oh, he would come round in the morning. He was resting in a stable close by." Abel, the man who was to go with us, grinned.

I thought there was some mystery here.

The early dawn, which is lovely in this country, brought with its first glimmer coast-guard-men, the mare, the mule, and the baggage-mule; the latter we were particularly delighted to see. To my amusement Mr Z. offered to sell me the three at a considerable abatement of the price urged the day before. Fortunately I adhered to my resolution of hiring only.

On being mounted, I found that the pommel of the saddle was fixed immovably on the left side. There was no time to alter this, and in consequence, on setting off, I began to realise that it was anything but pleasant to ride faster than a walk at first.

"Never fear, Señora," said Abel at length; "we have a long way to go, and if we are to arrive at Arimesine to-night we must get on a little faster."

Being accustomed, or nearly so, to the motion induced by the difference between the English and Spanish way of mounting, my confidence returned, and I declared myself ready to increase the speed.

"Wait till we turn off to the left, Señora; there will be more shade, and then we can get on well," Abel remarked encouragingly.

Eduardo had ridden a good deal in advance; as he neared the road turning to the left, we saw the baggage-mule suddenly break loose from his hold, and dart at full speed among the trees, Eduardo following as hard as he could gallop.

This made the mare a little restive, but Abel's strong arm subdued her. "Let us turn into the left path," said he; "you will have to dismount and wait whilst I go on. The baggage-mule has bolted."

Turning into the road on the left, which was little more than a

bridle-path through shrubs and nice soft grass, the man dismounted me, at the same time tying the mare to a low bush. There was plenty of grass, and so this one of the party, at least, was very much at ease.

"You won't mind being left a short time," said Abel; "it is quite safe. I had better follow Eduardo quick. Ah, it was time," he said, returning with something in his hand. It was my dressing-comb, in two parts, and full of dirt and sand.

I accompanied him a little way, and had the pleasure of picking up one of my slippers, part of a little book, and many other things with which my handbag had been packed. Further on lay my long tin box, unfastened, indeed, but stove in by what was unmistakably a violent kick in the wrong direction.

"Ah," said Abel, contemplating this, "the mule is wild; he has rushed against the trees, and the baggage has got loose; I hope there is no accident. Señora, I am sorry to leave you alone, but I had better get on to Eduardo."

So he sped away at a flying swing-trot, and I was left literally to pick up the pieces.

A little farther on was what I recognised to be a shirt which I had bought at Señor Bahl's store to present to Eduardo. The boy was so delighted with it, that he had said he would wear it when he arrived at Comayagua to visit his friends. Here it was, then, in pieces, and a part of it torn quite out. The ground bore marks of hoofs in all directions.

All the little things I had collected for refreshment on the road were destroyed without mercy. Here some biscuits ground to powder, and amalgamating freely with mother earth; there some plantains and bananas reduced to

pulp; in another place was my tin of portable soup, stove in, and almost unrecognisable.

Fortunately, perhaps, I had so much to do in getting these fragments together, that I had scarcely time to think how unlucky this first start of mine had been. Two hours at least would have been wasted, and there would be no time for rest in the middle of the day. Having gathered together all I could find, I sat down on a large stone close to the mare, with the collection by my side, and with anything but satisfaction in my mind.

Half an hour must have passed, and then the mare began to fidget and look about her. She had heard voices, and she almost tried to put down her head on my shoulder. It has been said that she was a pet animal; and really her action seemed to say, "Don't you hear that?"

I by this time had heard the voices distinctly; so I stood up beside the animal and waited for the speakers.

Round a little winding projection, which jutted out on the principal path, came two quiet-looking men towards me. Lifting his *sombrero* (that ugly thing, the hat proper, is unknown in Honduras), the elder of them said: "We are sent to help you, Señora, English lady. We have met Abel and the *mozo*. Mule very bad—very savage; won't allow itself to be loaded again. Abel thought you would allow us to take you on. We are woodcutters, and Abel knows us."

I turned to mount, the younger lad helping me. As I did so, I expressed a hope that Eduardo was not hurt.

"No; he is a good rider, and the other mule behaved well. But how are you to get on—*quien sabe?* That mule is *el demonio* himself."

The men took the long box between them, and a parcel was made of the *débris*. We soon reached Abel and the lad, who were sitting on a little bank. The riding-mule was browsing calmly enough; the baggage-animal was tied to a tree, and was still stamping with rage.

"What are we to do?" I inquired in despair. "Had we not better go back?"

"We will try and see if the baggage-mule will bear loading again," said Abel; "it would be such a loss to return. We will try."

The four men approached the offender, and were most gentle in their treatment. All was to no purpose. As soon as he felt the load on his back, he started violently, and rushed against the tree, with the determined purpose of pushing it off. Abel now pulled out his handkerchief and blindfolded the animal.

This had the effect of quieting it, and as it was nearly exhausted from kicking, the load was replaced without much exhibition of feeling on the sufferer's part.

Everything being packed, we went on our way, one of the woodcutters undertaking to lead the refractory mule. As long as we went slowly all was satisfactory; but the moment we attempted to get out of a walk the mule showed fight. Even the baggage was of no avail.

The woodcutters were obliged to leave us; they had their work in another direction, and they could not lose time. "I am very sorry—very much ashamed," said the elder, with emphasis on the last word, "that the custom-house officer should have let you hire that beast. It is a robbery; the mule is not half broken; it is quite young, and I do not think it has carried a load more than thrice in its life."

"Abel has not told me that," said I.

"How should he? He is a soldier, and he has to obey the customs officer; he must not speak; but he knows as well as I do that the creature does not belong to the customs officer. Señor Z. has hired it from a charcoal-burner who lives near him, and I have no doubt he has made a good thing of it. You have paid beforehand?"

"Yes; I have hired these three animals to take us to Arimesine."

"May you get there to-night! *Adios, Señora; muchas gracias.*" as I put a trifle in his hand. Thus speaking, our two assistants wended their way.

The situation was certainly very unsatisfactory, and Abel's replies to my inquiries did not tend to enliven matters. "At this rate," the man said, "we shall never reach Arimesine to-night; and I am under orders to bring back the animals early to-morrow morning."

"But the delay is entirely your master's fault; he had no right to give me an unbroken animal to carry the baggage. If we cannot reach Arimesine to-night, what are we to do?"

"We must stay at a place called Goascaron; the head man there will take you in. He is an Italian doctor, and keeps a store. Oh, *muy bruta—muy bruta!*" (horrid brute) broke off Abel, as the mule turned turned sharp round and literally ploughed the earth with its feet, refusing to stir, though Eduardo dragged it with all his strength.

Here was a nice state of things! It was equally impossible to advance or retire. Fortunately, as we were consulting whether we really ought to return to Aceituna, we met a countryman, who was riding a nice-looking mule. To him Abel hastened with all speed. A short conference, and matters were to go on well-oiled wheels I hoped. The baggage was trans-

ferred from the refractory baggage-mule to the consul's riding-mule, and the countryman lent his animal for our use. Then our rampageous friend was given over to the man's keeping, and some arrangement was made as to how this treasure was to be restored to his owner. It was disgusting to see him go off as meek as a mouse the moment that he was led away.

"These creatures are very wise," Abel said; "that brute knows as well as I do that he has had the best of it. I know that man: he is going to take it to a stable." Then he continued with a grin, "The master won't like our turning Carlos into a baggage-mule, though."

"The master has behaved very badly throughout. Are you really obliged to take the mules back in the night?"

"I must obey orders, Señora; I am a soldier."

"We have lost so much time, that I am sure I cannot ride to Arimesine; under the best circumstances it would have been a long stretch. Very well; I will stop at Goascaron, and I shall write to Consul Bahl and tell him how badly Mr Z. has behaved. He must have known that we could not reach Arimesine to-night."

"I cannot say, Señora; but it is a great many leagues off!"

"How many?"

Abel could not tell. In this country it is equally impossible to ascertain correctly either the length of a distance or the time of day. A wholesale importation of clocks and milestones would certainly prove a national benefit in this direction.

The sun was now fierce, and we had quitted the shade of the forest and scattered trees. Eduardo dismounted and offered Abel his turn to ride; but this strong, cheery

man declined. "Let me ride when I am tired," he said. "I will stay by the Señora; it is very tiresome for her to use a saddle with the pommel placed on the side opposite to the one she is accustomed to; the mare, too, is fidgety."

So she was. A passing bird, a stray cow tearing at a hedge, all startled her; and farther on, when we met a drove of mules, she rushed into the middle of it, turning round and round, and exhibiting a strong inclination to bolt. Abel explained that horses have in general a very strong dislike to stranger-mules; for this reason—they are seldom stabled together. The mare agrees very well with the mules at home, because they are accustomed to each other and have been reared together.

We got on, however, at a fair speed, halting two hours afterwards by a pretty running stream to take some refreshment. Eduardo sought among the huts of the country village near, and succeeded in obtaining some milk, *tortillas*, and a delicious water-melon.

The men went to a little distance to smoke, and I took advantage of the opportunity to bathe my feet in the lovely stream. They were burning from my wearing black boots, a most unwise article of dress to adopt in tropical countries. I had a little tin case, containing a square of soap, which, fortunately, was in my pocket, and so it escaped the devastation caused by the baggage-mule; and with thankfulness for this comfort, I revelled in the pebbly delicious water.

The painter of river scenery can nowhere in the wide world find more charming subjects for his brush than the lovely water-courses of Spanish Honduras. The cascades among the mountains are simply magnificent, and deserve

to be classed among the finest in any land. The lowest and dirtiest of villages in the interior can generally show a beautiful running stream in its midst; and it is, I think, in consequence of this, that typhoid fever and blood-poisoning are unknown.

These pests are not at this time the correct thing to die of in Honduras, as appears to be the case in our own land. Can it be that polluted water is in reality the mainspring of half the ailments of the English people? My fervent wish for Honduras is that she may ever deserve her name. *Hondo*, being interpreted, means a pond or brook; and the brooks of this fair region are so pure and health-giving, that when the iron hand of progress penetrates here, may its mission be other than that of tainting, for commercial greed, the life of a country.

Ah, how many in our own England turn to spirits and to beer, because the only water to which they have access is poisoned by chemical drugs, or is made the receptacle of all foul things!

A weary ride in burning sun and over rough road brought us to the outskirts of Goascaron. My strength was nearly spent, owing to the badness of the road and the uneasy motion caused by the manner of mounting.

Strong kind Abel more than once carried me over the smaller streams; for, as the darkness came on, the mare plunged unsteadily, and sometimes carried me into very deep water. The heat, too, had been very prostrating; and so it was with a feeling of relief that I heard a clear incisive voice call out, "Is that the lady from Aceituna?" Eduardo had ridden on in advance, and the Italian doctor was standing at his side waiting to receive us.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART V.

CHAPTER XVIII. — AND NOW IT WAS ALL OVER !

"Alas ! silly fool that I was,"

(Thus, sadly complaining, he cried),—

"When first I beheld that fair face,"

"Twere better by far I had died."

—ROWE.

Two hundred miles did the cruel train bear Challoner away from Overton at last.

Two hundred miles did that inhuman monster carry a reluctant wretched man ; and faster and faster it sped with him away from love, delight, enchantment,—and nearer and nearer it hurried him towards despair, deceit, and misery ; —further from where he would be, nearer to where he would not be ; —further from Eden, nearer to the wilderness.

He sat with his face backwards, emblematically. By instinct he had thrown himself into a seat which commanded the last view of the woods and uplands now so familiar, and to all time so dear,—and upon these he gazed as long as they remained in sight. They vanished, and still he looked on ; he had nothing else, it seemed, to do. Newspapers, magazines, and the usual accompaniments of a traveller had been neglected or forgotten. He had nothing to read, nor did he want anything ; he had the carriage to himself, but he hardly noticed that it was so ; and there was a hot-water tin, but he did not put his feet on it ; and cigars in his pocket, but he did not smoke them.

Hour after hour went by and found the solitary man still in the same position, still dead to all that passed, still with eyes turned absently, softly, and tenderly towards an unseen spot, which to memory and love was yet visible.

Of what really came and went Challoner beheld nothing.

Now and again an impatient movement, a frown or a sigh would burst forth to betray that the day-dream which proved so overmastering had its moments of perturbation, its thorns among the rose-leaves ; now and again the dreamer would start forward, sit up, pull himself together with a passing expression of the lip and motion of the hand that seemed to betoken a commencement of something new, of a resolution and decision that had not been there before,—but ever as it rose would the momentary impulse fade away again, its cold unwelcome presence thrust out by some too powerful, too exquisite rival,—and Challoner, a willing slave to the latter, would once more sink back on the luxurious cushion, lost, revelling in musings that needed no effort, and that, alas ! were not to be dispelled by an effort. He was living the past month over again.

From first to last he had been a month at Overton. Excuses and arguments for thus prolonging an accidental stay, a mere detention for a single night, had been so acceptable both to himself and his hosts, that the continually postponed day of departure had almost seemed as though it never would come, never could really and actually arrive ; and when at length it had, it had seen him depart, well-nigh in silence, and well-nigh mad with the wild longing for a re-

prieve in any shape and from any quarter.

Yet would he not reprove himself; and the brothers had had to let him go, less concerned than he it is true, but still grudgingly, reluctantly, flatteringly, with many an injunction to "Come again,"—and what Lady Matilda had felt she had kept to herself.

And now it was all over, and he had only to look back upon it.

Never again must he cross that friendly threshold and hear that pleasant welcome; he had touched for the last time that fair hand, had met for the last time that dark eye, had heard a final farewell in that gentle voice. No sign had Matilda made; in no wise could he or any other see that she had been expectant, or surprised, or grieved, or wounded,—and yet he felt, he felt he might have won her.

He might at any rate have tried his chance. He would not have been waved aside, smiled down, nipped in the bud and laid low in the dust as Whewell had been, and as he had himself seen Whewell be. Tush! he had already gone farther, dared more and gained more, than Whewell had ever dreamed of. What of those wild sea walks over the moaning cliffs, up the lonely glen, along the unfrequented woodland paths? Who saw the arm which held the slender form beneath the cliff on the brink of the foaming waterfall? Whose presence marred the twilight hour in the dim old gallery? For whom alone was the soft strain of music when the light was gone? And there had been a day when her flowers had been worn by him, and her song had been sung for him,—when Overton had stopped short in his speech and held his breath as though struck all at once by a truth too strange for fancy, and Teddy had flung himself out of the

room, and had scarce been seen or spoken to for days after.

It had been Challoner, Challoner himself, the conscious cause of it all, who had brought back the penitent to Matilda's side eventually.

He had come on Challoner's arm, looking on Challoner as his friend, indebted to Challoner as the peacemaker—and Challoner had lain awake half the night afterwards. Not even the angrily affectionate beseechings of this brother had prevailed to make him stay on at Overton after this. With a letter which came in at breakfast in his hand, and with its urgency as his plea, he broke or tore aside the fetters which bound him at last, and told himself that he had broken them for ever.

He had got it over. That at first was Challoner's principal thought. He had done the thing properly, and had not made a fool of himself. They could see that he had been moved, as he ought to have been moved; that he had felt grateful, and nervous, and wretched, and had devoutly wished himself at the moment anywhere but where he was. So far, well. He had wrung Overton's hand, and muttered a something in Overton's ear of which it was impossible for any one to make out a syllable, and he had broken down—yes, actually and palpably broken down—in accepting a remembrance from Teddy. But this was all natural enough under the circumstances, while the supreme ordeal, the parting with Matilda, found him outwardly so calm that he caught himself wondering at himself, and unduly elated all too soon. The internal convulsion had come and gone unperceived, and he saw that he had lost nothing in his lady's eyes. Up to a certain point she had assuredly

understood him—that is to say, she had seen that he must fly, though she knew not how good was the cause he had for doing so. She had probably taken it that he would not abuse the extraordinary kindness and confidence where-with he had been treated, and that his modesty had told him he was already doing so in his heart. He knew that he had pleased Matilda, as in truth he had pleased every woman he had ever cared to please. She had wanted no eager, assiduous, in-season and out-of-season prating lover. She had turned against the lively Whewell from the moment that “lover” appeared written on his brow, and had turned, as it happened, straight to Challoner; soon she had ceased to ask herself how or why, but had hung upon his words, and listened for his footstep, and fretted when he was absent, and shone out like a star when he was by. And of all this he had scarcely been ignorant; there had been moments when he had divined it all.

She must have known why he had gone, and she must have been proud of him for going as he did.

From one long reverie of mingled pain and pleasure, it seemed to Challoner that he was at length somewhat harshly aroused by familiar voices proceeding from familiar lips. The train had reached its destination—or rather our traveller’s destination,—and he was slowly and with a heavy heart stepping out of the carriage, when he became aware of a group of girls on the platform close to his elbow, and heard three tongues all together exclaim in the liveliest accents and almost in a breath, “What a pity we came!”

“Nonsense!”

“Here he is!”

Challoner shook hands with all three.

“Well, now that you have come, I shan’t say any more,” continued the last speaker, a tall fresh-coloured damsel with a bright handkerchief protruding from the front of her tight-fitting Newmarket. “As you are here, I shan’t grudge our wait, though we have been here for an age or more, and have lost the best of the afternoon. Mary would have it we should be late. I knew we should not be late. Catch us! We are always before the time for everything nowadays, between Mary and Emily. *You* are late, though, Jem; how is that?”

“Are we late?” said Challoner, absently.

“The train is due at four, you know. Mary looked it out.”

“Oh, trains are never in to their time,” said Mary, “and it is all nonsense about our waiting; I did not mind waiting.”

“Oh, of course not: *she* did not mind waiting; that is a good one, I must say,” laughed her sister. “Do you hear that, Jem? That is for your benefit. Well, thank heaven, I retain my senses, whatever Mary and Emily may do. Emily was dying to go to cathedral this afternoon (we are turned so direfully devout nowadays, you must know, Jem); since Herbert came after Emily——”

“Do hush,” said Emily with a nudge; “how you do run on, Bertha! and can’t you see that Jem is not attending to you one little bit? He is wondering where his baggage is, are you not, Jem? What part was it put in? Where is the van? Back, or front?”

“Back, I think.”

He had no idea, but he had to say one or the other.

“Well, if it is back, what do you go front for?” inquired Miss Emily, innocently.

She thought it very amusing, as

did they all, to see the solitary portmanteau extracted, at length, from beneath the very seat whereon Challoner had been sitting, and to note how little he either knew or cared about it; she insisted on jumping into the carriage herself to see what else he had left behind, not being at all clear, she protested, whether an arm or a leg might not be found missing presently. And she searched, and inquired, and made merry over the subject, till his rueful smile faded away from sheer impatience, and the disgust of his soul was almost visible on his countenance. What had brought the girls there? He had never dreamed of their meeting him at the station, and at the best of times would have dispensed with the attention, while *to-day*——. They stood about enjoying themselves and the attention they attracted, and they put their little hands in their pockets, and stamped their smart little feet, and shuddered and shook their shoulders, and all spoke at once, and rather too eagerly to their distinguished friend, their six-foot-two of straw-coloured Harris cloth; and they were in the porters' way and the passengers' way, and jostled by one and another, and remarked upon by everybody—so that though no harm was done, and there was nothing actually reprehensible in the scene, it jarred terribly on a man who had been thinking for the last six or seven hours, nay, for the last three or four weeks, of a Lady Matilda. Lady Matilda, had she seen his present company, would have passed them by as though she saw them not; but she would have thought—too well he knew what she would have thought: all at once it seemed to flash upon him as a revelation that Matilda was the very proudest woman he had ever known.

"He's napping!"

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"He is not well."

"Boh!" cried the third close to his ear.

"Behave, Bertha," remonstrated both of Bertha's sisters, tittering, with their fingers before their mouths; "behave, can't you, you bad girl!" continued Mary; "don't you see people are looking? Jem, do tell her."

Oh, if he could: if there had been any question of telling; if he could only have ordered them off the platform, out of sight and out of hearing! But no; where they went, he must go: and though they might, and at length did lead the way, the victim had to follow, and to follow close behind. Had they been his sisters—but they were not his sisters; and as the quartet march out of the station and up to the town—for it was agreed to walk rather than drive—we may, without farther mystery or circumlocution, inform our readers who and what were these new arrivals on the scene. They were the daughters of worthy William Tufnell, the principal banker of Clinkton, to which place Challoner had now come,—and one of the three was his betrothed bride.

Now Challoner had not found any particular fault with the eldest Miss Tufnell either in face, figure, or demeanour, when, a few months previously, it had been suggested by a careful elder sister that a wife for him might be found in the family of the wealthy banker. He had met Mary Tufnell at his sister's house. She was pretty, well dressed, and sprightly—perhaps over-sprightly; but being a grave man, whom chatter did not repel merely because it was chatter, he saw in the somewhat fatiguing flow of spirits which never failed, only the light-heartedness of extreme youth, and willing to be amiable, fell in with the notion of matrimony tolerably

soon and tolerably easily. He was getting on in life, as Lady Fairleigh said. He would rather like to show his friends that he could do something yet, and something with a flavour of thirty thousand pounds, moreover: since Tufnell was known to be worth ninety thousand if he were worth a penny, and the three daughters who have already been introduced in this chapter, were his sole children and heirs.

Then Lady Fairleigh had been able to point out that homely as was their origin, there attached both respect and credit to the family; that no one ever had, or ever would have, a word to say against the match; that the proposed bride was barely twenty years of age, at which time of life she would soon unlearn all that it was desirable should be unlearned—whereas with equal speed she might be counted upon to pick up all that it was requisite to know; that she appeared to be good-humoured, well educated, and adaptable,—in fine, that for a younger son, a son who had abandoned his profession, and had never had any prospects—for Jem Challoner, in short, her dear, good, kind, provident brother Jem—nothing could be better than to offer his heart and hand with all convenient speed in such a convenient quarter.

Jem thought so too—with regard to the hand at least; as to the heart, he was over forty years of age, and supposed his falling-in-love days were over.

But he had a high opinion of Lady Fairleigh's judgment, and on this occasion it jumped with his own too entirely not to double its value. He would certainly act upon it, make hay while the sun shone, and take to his domestic hearth, if fortune favoured, the cheerful smiling lassie provided for him.

Was he to know that in her, as

in himself, he had been grossly, terribly mistaken? Was he to tell that in her own home and among her own folks the Mary he knew, or thought he knew, would develop into another Mary, and a Mary that affrighted his inmost soul? Was he to suspect that the lively banter, necessarily kept in check at Lady Fairleigh's table and in Lady Fairleigh's drawing-room, would run riot in the unrestraint of home, and would resolve itself into chaff, chaff, chaff from morning till night? It was said of the Miss Tufnells that they would chaff a man till he did not know which was his head and which were his heels; but alas! Challoner found nothing to admire in the gift.

A great mistake had been made—a mistake which could never be unmade; and of one thing he was speedily convinced, that it could only be away from Clinkton, from her native place, with its native associations, surroundings, and dialect, that he could hope to regain any measure of the complacency with which he had at first regarded his *fiancée*. He stayed at Clinkton a week, and left without fixing the wedding-day.

But then, as Mary's mother observed, that was just like his thoughtfulness. He did not wish to hurry anybody, and he knew what a piece of work it would be when once it came to taking away from her and papa their Mary. And to be sure, Mary was young enough, and there was time enough, and she could not be thankful enough, nor think enough of Mr Jem for his consideration.

Such consideration even won upon the old banker himself. He had been both gruff and grumpy at the first demand for his daughter's hand; he had eyed Jem Challoner's letter—for the thing had been done by letter—with mistrust, and had

hummed and hawed, and not known very well whether to say "Yes" or "No." But one thing and another, in particular, Mrs Tufnell's anxiety to get her daughters married, or, as she phrased it, "off," carried the day. A neighbour had got two daughters "off," each at the age of eighteen, and this had caused even Tufnell's broad bosom to share his wife's chagrin after a fashion. So that what with the timely remembrance, and the knowing that he was now sued by a member of one of the oldest of the county families, and that the match, if agreed to, would at once lift him and his into the county set—the set just above his, the step just beyond him—it was impossible to be quite as independent and indifferent as he would have liked to appear.

Moreover, he knew about Jem, and knew that there were worse men. Supposing his girl were to set her heart upon a worse man—upon one of those silly, noisy, vapouring, elbowing, ridiculous apes at the barracks, for instance! There were plenty of them about; and if he had not snapped his teeth at every single grinning face that grinned behind its hairy horns upon his doorsteps, the moustachioed gentlemen would have crept up the girls' sleeves, and carried them off by hook or by crook before now. He had had a time of it, since Mary and Emily grew up, that he had; but he had kept the red-coats off somehow: they cut out of his way like greyhounds if he came across them nowadays.

But James Challoner was different, and in the end the banker gave Challoner a fairly cordial reply.

Then the two met, and the good impression deepened. Hitherto they had only occasionally seen

each other, or a part of each other; and Challoner had known that the burly pair of shoulders in front of him belonged to Tufnell the banker, and the banker had been aware that the hat which towered high above the other hats in the busy street pertained to old Mr Challoner's youngest son—and that was all. Now, face to face, all went well.

All might have gone ill very easily. Had the suitor shown himself keen, or sharp, or pressing; had he, on the other hand, affected ignorance of Mr Tufnell's affairs, and declined to be enlightened; had he, in heroic mood, raved and protested—had he even talked of his Mary as "his," he had undone all.

But by no such means had Challoner sought to strengthen his position. He had been perfectly moderate and truthful. He liked the young lady, and thought that they could be happy together; he should be glad to find that a marriage with her was likely to meet with the approval of both families. In almost as few words as these, the state of his mind had been set forth, and such laconic simplicity and straightforwardness had gone down wonderfully with an old gentleman who was ever on the lookout for artifice and exaggeration. At the end of their first interview, he had risen and held fast Challoner's hand. "You shall have my daughter, sir; and you shall have her fortune. Mr Challoner, I shall be proud and content to give them both into your hands." Indeed he thought as much of the one as the other; and perhaps there are other people in the world besides the worthy Tufnell who consider thirty thousand pounds a very fair equivalent to an amiable, ordinary, pretty daughter.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE FRIENDS OF HIS FRIENDS.

"The outward forms the hidden man reveal—
We guess the pulp before we cut the peel."

—HOLMES.

Still better pleased had been Challoner's future father-in-law as time had gone on. That there had been no word of a speedy union, no hinting at settlements, and no urging him to fix a day or even a time, had been all that was needed to fill up the measure of the regard in which he held Mary's lover. *There was a man for you!* *there was sense and stamina!* If the girl had set her heart upon one of those ridiculous apes at the barracks now, how different it would have been! He would have been worried out of his life about the folly of long engagements, and the necessity for making arrangements, and the uncertainty of their movements, —and certes, they and such as they, who might have to pack their traps and tramp at any moment, would have had some reason on their side for looking sharp and making the money-bags sure; but see, here was Mr Challoner, quite pleased to be as he was, to come and go, and court Mary like a gentleman,—and he should not lose by it; he should see that, when the lawyers were called in. And a right noisy, jolly, old-fashioned hullabaloo of a wedding they would have when wedding-time came,—that was to say, when his busy season had passed, and he could have time to think about it, and when the old Dean's cough was better, and he could tie the knot himself.

And then Challoner had departed in November, it being understood that he was to return for Christmas, but that even then nothing need definitely be settled about bringing the engagement to a close, all being of one mind on the subject. He

had gone, and we know what had befallen him. His falling-in-love days over? They had never rightly begun until he saw and heard Matilda. Alas! alas!

In the absence of one suitor, however, another appeared at the banker's house. This was Mr Mildmay, a minor canon of the cathedral, who had come to Clinkton in the summer, and had made a favourable impression on the Clinkton people in general. He was an amiable young clergyman, kind-hearted, unassuming, and indefatigable. Like Challoner, he was superior to the Tufnells in point of birth, and, again like him, inferior to them in the matter of worldly goods; but whatever he was, he was not, according to Mr Tufnell, one of the ridiculous apes at the barracks, and he was permitted to engage himself to Emily Tufnell. Hence her sister's playful references to the devoutness and the cathedral.

Mr Mildmay now fell in with the party on their way up from the station, and it was evident that so agreeable an acquisition to their number was not altogether unexpected by the young ladies, who, all greeting and introducing at once, blocked up the narrow footpath in a way that Challoner would fain have pointed out, but instead had to find himself the recipient of a vigorous shake of the hand, and sympathetic congratulatory "How are you?" of the warmest description; to which, I am sorry to say, he replied by a jerk of his head, and a "How do?" in a tone never heard at Overton Hall.

Of this, however, his fair companions, happily unconscious, took

no note; for all their attention being diverted by Herbert's appearance into a fresh channel, Herbert and not Jem was for the moment everything.

"Well, Herbert?"

"What news, Herbert?"

"Will the room be full, Herbert?"

Herbert thought the room would be full; he also thought the night would be fine, and that the sky would be clear; furthermore, he proceeded to fear that the lecture, which it was explained to Challoner he was to deliver that evening in the Town-hall of Clinkton on the valleys of Palestine, would bore him sadly, and kindly hoped that he would not think it necessary to turn out to hear it. His friends had let him in for the lecture, but that was no reason—with a cheerful laugh—why he should let his friends in for listening to it: he was afraid he should be dreadfully prosy.

As he trotted along, off and on the pavement every moment, answering every question, responding to every remark, warning the ladies of the nearness of vehicles, finding clean crossings in the muddy streets—all devotion, good temper, and urbanity—he did wonder a little in his heart at Mr Challoner's manners. Challoner heard as though he heard not, walked as though he saw not, stalked through and round obstacles as though they did not exist, and only replied to observations when they could not be ignored. What sort of a fellow could Emily's sister have got hold of?

The girls, however, started a new idea. Poor Jem was tired. Poor Jem had been ill while he was in the south, and the journey had been too much for him, and he ought never to have walked up,—and now how naughty of him not to have said so before! When the house was reached, good Mrs Tuf-

nell was concerned to the degree of scolding everybody all round, and could not really have believed it possible, after their preventing her sending the carriage as she had wanted to do, that they could not even have taken a cab, when there were scores of cabs at the station, but must needs make that poor dear walk up all the way, and he quite knocked up with travelling for seven hours on end. And the upshot was, that the outraged and insulted giant had actually to lie down full length upon the sofa, and submit to having a pillow shaken up under his head, and tea and muffins brought to him and placed upon a chair by his side.

Humour was not in Challoner's way, but he did see the irony of this. It did not make him merry, but it saved him from being rude. He could have pitched the sofa out of the window, and the tea and muffins after it; but he lay on the one, and swallowed the others, and he only laughed to himself rather an ugly laugh as he did so.

The rest of the party were, however, in excellent spirits. The lecture was as it should have been, the principal theme for conversation; and hopes and fears regarding the weather, speculations as to the audience, and reckoning up the tickets gone and the tickets likely to go, filled up the time till the dinner-gong sounded. "And we dine early because of the lecture, Mr Jem," explained the elderly lady, turning to him her flushed and bonneted face, warm with the warm room and the warm tea, and the excitement of the evening in prospect. How like, oh how like Mary she was, or would be when a few years should have amplified Mary's form and deepened the red on Mary's cheek! he saw her now before him, he saw ——"We dine at six," continued the speaker, as the others left the

room,—“at six punctually, as we shall have to be off before seven. I wish we could have made it sooner; and indeed I could have done very well without my dinner at all, for we are to have a bit of supper when we come back; and really, with tea now, and all—However, papa does not like to be put out of his way—not much, at least. Papa is very kind when you take him the right side, but half an hour sooner for dinner he thinks a good deal of; and so we just took the half-hour, and asked no more.”

“I suppose you would like me to go?” said Challoner. To almost any other person he would have said flatly, “Nothing will induce me to go;” but he had never received anything but kindness from Mary’s mother, and the rebellious speech stuck in his throat.

Even as it was, he startled her.

“My dear, are you really ill?” she cried. “Oh, I am sure you must be really ill, or you never would have thought of it. Dear me! And Mary, who has been so pleased at your being here in time, she will be so let down; but if you are really ill——”

He disclaimed the idea.

“You think the lecture will be no great thing? And between ourselves,” nodding portentously, and sinking her voice, “between ourselves, papa is of your opinion. But then, you know, poor young man, he’ll do his best; and as he is to be one of ourselves very soon—indeed we look upon him, and upon you too, as quite one of ourselves already—why, we are bound to make the best of him. So I have ordered the flowers and flags, and papa pays for the hall. And to be sure, if it pleases Emily—and she will take it all for gospel—and I daresay it will be nice enough, poor dear; but don’t

you mind, Mr Jem,” tapping him kindly on the arm,—“don’t you mind, but just go and sleep if you like; we can all say you are tired out,—and I shouldn’t wonder if papa naps too. Bless me! it would never do to stay away though.”

The night was clear when the party sallied forth. “Mild as milk,” announced the paternal voice from the front door; and in consequence the speaker did not see fit to do more than bolster himself up in his thick overcoat, and wind his woollen comforter twice round his neck.

“No, no,” cried he, as his wife put her hand within Challoner’s arm; “no, no—none of that, Poll. ‘Fair play’s a jewel,’ and you and I have had our turn; we must let the young folks have theirs now. Zounds, man, Jem! you didn’t think to take the missus, did you? That would have been a pretty sight. No, no; she must put up with the old man, and you go with your own girl there. Lead the way, lassies; come along—come along.”

Now what made Mary Tufnell’s lover stumble upon another “Come along—come along,” in the whirlpool of his recollections at that ill-favoured moment? He was trying to keep Overton out of his head,—to banish Overton, drown Overton, bury Overton a thousand leagues deep out of mind and out of memory,—and it seemed as if every single thing that was done and word that was spoken from minute to minute, only served to bring into stronger and more cruel light visions that cut him to the heart. Now, as with his betrothed bride under his charge, he followed the rest of the party up the street, and Mary babbled of this thing and that, well pleased with herself and her escort, enjoying the whole to the top of her bent, and demanding attention and response every minute, one might have

thought that here at least was no opportunity for torturing remembrance; and yet as Challoner spoke and listened and obeyed orders and kept up appearances—and he was sufficiently aroused and on the alert to do all this so as to excite no remark from a not over-exacting person—yet even as he did it all, he was living in another scene.

That day week he had stood with Matilda beside the moonlit waves. He felt again the cold salt air upon his cheek, beheld again the foaming ocean and the outline of a face between it and him,—a face that was so near he durst not watch too closely—a face that turned at times its mute sympathetic appeal to his,—lips that were parted to emit soft sighs of wonder and delight,—eyes that shone, reflecting in their own depths the beauty they were gazing upon; and had there not been a bold presumptuous whisper ere he and she had turned to leave the spot, and a silence that gave its own assent? Had there not been——”

“Jem, Jem, what *are* you thinking about? Do take more care. You stepped straight into the very worst of the puddle.”

The hall reached, everything seemed to promise a great success: the gas flared out lustily, the flags made a gallant show upon the wall, the holly-strings looked as like arches as holly-strings could do; and Herbert met them at the door with the news that scarcely a ticket remained to be disposed of.

“That’s the thing, my boy,” replied his future father-in-law slapping him cordially on the shoulder; “that’s the thing to stick to. Sell the tickets and never mind the rest. Let the folks come or not; let ’em stay away if they’ve a mind to; let ’em drop off their chairs if they can’t keep awake,—but make ’em pay for their tickets. Once

they’ve paid for their tickets, they may behave themselves as they choose afterwards.”

Our party were then ushered to their seats—front seats, but not the front seats of all, because a duke and a duchess were coming “and Lord knows who besides,” confided Mr Tufnell to the uninitiated Challoner; and accordingly, close behind the vacant row of first chairs filed in the next most important people, showing perhaps a little too plainly by their demeanour that in this light they considered themselves.

Emily had of course the post of honour, and the happy Herbert was only too proud to explain to her, leaning over the back of the chairs in front to do so, all his fears, hopes, and surmises. She was not to have him all to herself, however: he had to attend to Mrs Tufnell’s beckoning fan, to assure her that the draught which had found out her rheumatic shoulder would disappear once the room was full and the doors closed, and beg to be allowed to draw up her fur cloak until that desirable end was accomplished; while even Mary liked to have a word with the young lecturer, who was *the* person for the time, and who did not take it amiss when she declared that the best flower-pots were all on Emily’s side.

They were early and had some time to wait, but that did not distress anybody. They had come to be early, to fill the room, to form a basis, as it were, upon which the superstructure was to be built, and their good-humour and obligingness never flagged, needing only Herbert’s assurances from time to time that all was going on well, and that he would begin directly the first row of seats should be filled. He was in the act of saying this for the third time, when he had to hop smartly out of the way, to make

room for the very people expected: and great was Challoner's relief when these proved to consist only of a couple of elderly dames, a sulky-looking schoolboy whose very collar showed that it had been put on unwillingly, and a demure little girl, more taken up with her curls and her mittens than with any hope of pleasure to be derived from the so-called entertainment; but neither duke nor duchess was there, and it was intimated that they would not be there.

They, at least, would not witness Jem Challoner's position and company, and he was spared the having to be recognised by them and speaking to them, which he had dreaded in spite of himself, and to which every other member of his party had secretly looked forward. Even the head of the family himself—even honest independent William Tufnell—was not so entirely satisfied as he should have been, on finding that the chairs though vacant had been duly paid for; he had not exactly meant *those* chairs, when he had professed indifference as to their occupation or not,—and though he would not have owned for the world to disappointment, he had undoubtedly lost one of the moments in life for which he was about to pay down his thirty thousand pounds! It was hardly playing him fair, and so he felt it.

The lecture, however, went off famously. Those who wearied did not yawn aloud, those who slept did not snore, and those who did not understand believed they did. The majority kept an eye of encouragement on Mr Mildmay, who was, as we have said, a general favourite; the rest ticked off their neighbours, and took patterns of head-dresses, ruffles, and the like. So that nobody was openly in a fidget; and when the whole thing was over, and the pamphlet closed,

and there was no more fear of another heart-rending "I will only detain you a *very* few minutes longer," or "I hope I do not weary you, but the subject is so very interesting," when the end had actually come—was not only coming, but had come,—when the lecturer, with bows of acknowledgment stepped down from his desk, and the applause was hearty, and portly radiant Mrs Tufnell burst her glove in clapping, and the banker thundered on the floor with his big umbrella, brought on purpose, how charming it all was—for every one but Jem Challoner!

"Such a delightful lecture, Mrs Tufnell!"

"Emily, dear, I do congratulate you."

"Nothing could have gone off better."

"What a full house! Have you looked round?"

"So lucky in the night."

"I am sure, with such numbers here, we shall never get a cab; we shall have to walk home."

"How many do you think we came? Three cabs full."

It seemed as if the whole room now pressed round and encircled the Tufnells, to whom this was due; as if from every quarter they were the centre of attraction, and people whom Challoner in his ignorance had been looking upon as—well, as very good townsfolk, he had now to be presented to as old friends, and great friends, and neighbours, and near neighbours,—it was "Mary," "Emily," "Bertha," from every one; it was "dear," and "darling," and "love," taps of the fan, pullings of the sleeve, whisperings in the ear, even kissings on the cheek all round, and round, and round. It was terrible; his ears tingled, his jaw fell.

In that quarter of an hour he learned a good deal. When he

had before stayed with the Tuffnells he had been in mourning, and had made the most of his mourning in order to ensure an immunity from morning calls and solemn dinner-parties. He had guessed what these might be, though his present experience went far beyond what imagination had pictured. Nobody had taken offence. "For indeed it just shows what a kind heart he has," cried the excellent mother. "To be sure there are few young men in these days that would take on so about an aunt, and an aunt, too, that left him a little bit of money; but that's Jem Challoner all the world over. I do say to papa I never came across any young man that cared less about money. Papa does not think so much of it. When I told him that we were not to have our friends while Jem was with us,—that was when he and Mary were first engaged, you know,—what do you think he said? He just up and says, 'That's one of

his aristocratic fads,' says he. Not that he thought any the worse of Jem for it. Papa is an aristocrat at heart."

So it was only now that the full fruition of what he had done dawned on the ill-fated Challoner—only now, now when he could least bear it, now when he could most appreciate it. Fresh from Overton, with all its exquisite simplicity and unconscious harmony, he had, without even the interval of a few weeks, or a few days, to encounter his cup of fate with all its dread ingredients.

He was very miserable; he had never been so miserable in his life.

And then, just as he was standing up, bowing and smiling,—forced by the awful exigency of the moment to bow and smile,—while standing there, a spectacle to gods and men, with a drawn grin upon his withered countenance, and an angry light in his soft eye, he caught sight, in the very midst of the motley assemblage, of a face he knew.

CHAPTER XX.—THE STRUGGLE.

"Shall I to Honour, or to Love give way?

For, as bright day, with black approach of night,
Contending makes a doubtful puzzling light,
So does my Honour and my Love together
Puzzle me so, I can decide on neither."

—SPENSER.

The face belonged to Miss Juliet Appleby, the Juliet whom at Overton Challoner had found a bore, a would-be flirt, and an incorrigible giggler, but who now in the elegance of her wrap, and the propriety of her demeanour, looked provokingly refined and superior. Apparently Miss Appleby knew how to behave in public, whatever licence she might give herself in private; and Challoner, watching in order to avoid her, could not help having yet another drop added to the bitterness of his re-

flections, in noting that even this little miss, this absurd Juliet who had been totally put out of sight, distanced, eclipsed, and set at naught when Matilda had been on the scene, now found a foil for herself in the women of his own party.

Oddly enough this was the first thing to occur to him, but it was soon swallowed up in another and more appalling second thought. Juliet here, on his track, likely, was sure to meet him and speak to him any day and any moment—for the first introduction at Over-

ton had been followed by others, and there was now quite an easy acquaintanceship between the two,—what should he do or say, should he be attacked, questioned, and called upon to give an account of himself? Moreover, not only was such an interview to be anticipated, but once seen, she would hear from others, must hear from some one, what had brought him to this place, and hearing meant telling again. The very thought of that telling again sent a shiver through his veins, since whatever the future might have in store for him it could have nothing worse than that Matilda should know all, and know it through another.

His only hope lay in being unseen, and in the possibility of Miss Appleby's hosts—for of course she was on a visit somewhere about,—of their living so far in the country as to be ignorant of town gossip. The Tufnells undoubtedly reigned supreme in Clinkton; there they were the great among the small, the lions among the asses, the best, the very best of their set. But Clinkton confined itself pretty much to Clinkton; the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, as of old; and even though the friends of Miss Appleby might be known to Challoner himself, they might not have any acquaintance with the banker's family, and might not refer to the engagement, having no reason for supposing it could interest their guest.

Certainly Juliet had never heard him speak of Clinkton. Certainly, unless she actually saw him there with her own eyes, she had no clue by which she could connect him with the place. Lady Fairleigh was away, the whole Challoner family were away; he might escape, he might even yet escape,—but should she see him, all was over.

His eye never left the slim figure which in its spare sharpness

of youthful outline had moved an inward smile and comparison at Overton, until he saw it pass through the curtained doorway; and grateful now for the press of human beings which had been so distasteful before, he welcomed every detaining introduction, and made the most of every stoppage.

The consequence was all that could be desired; when at length he emerged from the lecture-room, the coast was clear. It was best, Mrs Tufnell said, to let the carriage people get away first, and she hoped Mr Jem had not minded their remaining a little behind the great crush, but they had so many friends—he must see how many friends they had—and everybody wanted to have a word, and it would have been uncivil to hurry off,—but now she was ready, quite ready; and then followed farewells and nods, and shawling and muffling, followed by the brisk walk home, and the promised supper. And a goodly supper it was, in honour of the occasion,—and every one was joyous and mirthful, and Herbert changed the plates and drew the corks as deftly as he had ever traversed the vales of Palestine; and it was well on towards twelve o'clock ere the ladies retired, and those who were not staying in the house took their leave.

"You and I will have a cigar by ourselves, Jem," said Mr Tufnell then. "Help yourself, and pass the bottle. Heigho! I am tired. So are you, I can see. Well, we shall be good company for one another. I am sick of jabbering."

And in the quiet hour that followed, the best part of the old man's heart and mind stole gently into view.

He had bidden his daughters "Good night" with a hearty "God bless ye, lassies," and had straitly charged them to sit up no longer,

and not to oversleep themselves in the morning as the result of turning the house upside down at that hour of the night; and when they had gone, and the last rustle of their departing steps had died away, the smile left his ruddy cheek also, and a thoughtful gravity took its place, and out of the depths of his soul, out of the fullness of an honest, upright, overflowing heart, he intrusted to his solitary auditor secret thoughts and feelings that were to Challoner's excited imagination almost holy as compared with his own.

He had never felt himself so vile. He got away at last; got away to his own room, turned out the light, threw up the window, and blessed the midnight airs upon his aching brow. At last he was alone—free for a brief interval from that dreadful kindness, that intolerable unsuspiciousness; no longer obliged to force the cold caress and the hypocritical smile, and wonder how long such coldness and hypocrisy could escape observation.

He had seen the grey-haired parent's eye moisten, and heard his voice falter, and he might have to see and hear the same again,—but for the moment he had escaped.

He leaned out of the window; his great frame relaxed heavily, and his face worked as it would.

The following morning saw the result of the inward struggle.

"Why—what—what now?" cried Mr Tufnell, with his breath wellnigh driven out of his lips by astonishment. "Why, what is the meaning of this, James Challoner? You want to marry Mary off-hand? You, that I thought was content to wait a hundred years if so be as we thought right! What—what—what? Bless me! I don't understand this sort of thing,

that's what I don't. Marry Mary off-hand! Marry her straight away! But how the devil is a girl to be married straight away that has never heard a word about it till this very moment? And just before Christmas too! I never heard of such a thing. 'Pon my word, I never did. Why, we never have anything at Christmas, saving it's a hop for the youngsters, or a dinner or two for the old cronies. Christmas? Nobody gets married at Christmas. Christmas is not the time for private concerns like marrying, in my opinion. It's—it's almost profanity, that's what it is, to think of such a thing. We keep Christmas with our friends, with our neighbours, with all England, with all Christendom, with the world——" his voice rising higher and higher, "ay, and perhaps beyond it, Jem, my lad," dropping down again. "Yes," after a moment's pause,—“yes, Christmas is a great public festival, a—great—public festival,” pleased with the phrase; “and you and Mary—for I take it she has had a hand in this——?” inquiringly.

"Indeed, no. I have not spoken to Mary about it."

"And that's right; and don't you speak to her—no good will come of speaking to her. Why, man, I am not angry with you; it's natural enough, natural enough—but it don't suit my ideas. Now you see, you and I get on first-rate; you have never crossed me, and I have never crossed you—and I don't want," with emphasis, "I don't want to be obliged to cross you. I'll give in a little, d'ye see?" relenting as the young man remained silent, and it was to be presumed something daunted if not convinced. "I'll give in a bit. I'll meet you half-way, so to speak. Let me see, this is December, mid-December; well, we'll say Febru-

ary, if you like; the end of February. Eh? Will that do? Come, I had not meant it to be before Easter. I thought Easter would have done very well; but as it seems no, why, there is nothing for it but to give in with a good grace. We'll jostle up the parsons, and tell 'em, Lent or no Lent, we must have their services by the end of February."

"Would——" said Challoner, and got no further; but his hesitating face and tone betrayed dissatisfaction. Having nerved himself for the sacrifice, he felt he scarcely knew what—probably afraid to trust his own resolution for a second effort.

"What! you ain't content yet?" exclaimed Mr Tufnell, half amused and half indignant. "Well, I'll be jiggered! I never thought any one would ha' got as much out of me as you have got—you, Jem Challoner—and still you look as sour as corked claret. What the deuce—I'm not a swearing man, but I will say it—what the deuce is the meaning of this?"

"The meaning?" said Challoner, slowly. He felt he was cutting but a sorry figure, and could only wonder how he had been fool enough not to expect and prepare for opposition before. But the truth was, that so occupied had he been with his own aspect of the affair, that no sooner was his resolution made up, for better for worse, to fulfil his engagement, and to think no more of beautiful Matilda Wilmot, than he had, in his own mind, almost gone through the ceremony, taken on himself the vows, and looked on the whole thing as complete, before ever he had opened the subject. He had never had any clear idea as to why the marriage had not taken place earlier; he knew he had not cared about it sufficiently to press the point; he had been disappointed

in Miss Tufnell, and had been depressed in spirit on his introduction to her home and its surroundings: but he had fancied this uneasiness would wear off in time—that he and Mary would jog along comfortably enough, as many another couple did,—and had accordingly been entirely in the Tufnells' hands. If they had been eager for the union to take place, well and good; as they had not been eager, well and good also. But he had certainly deemed that only a slight pressure on his part was needed to bring it about as soon as he chose. He was now confused and disconcerted: a lover's flame he could scarcely pretend to, and no other plea offered.

"Well, I don't know what you are up to—hang me if I do!" ejaculated Tufnell, after a pause, in which he had scanned his companion narrowly. "The ways of men are as queer as the ways of women sometimes. You are not taking offence, are you?" he broke off sharply. "Of course, if I am giving offence"—and the old gentleman drew himself up, and the colour gathered on his cheek.

"Not at *all*!" said Challoner, earnestly. And yet, oh what it would have been to have seized that momentary gleam, fanned it, poured oil upon the fire, and broken at once and for altogether with the Tufnell family in violence and wrath! Pah! He hated himself for the fiend's suggestion. It had been easy enough—comparatively easy at least—when two hundred miles lay between him and his betrothed, to think of his engagement as a cruel fetter which had been laid upon him almost by a trick, and almost against his will,—and he had felt less and less bound by it as Matilda grew more and more dear: even at the outset the struggle had not been maintained beyond a certain point, and he had

given way, a long long way afterwards; but he had never, even whilst enduring trouble and dismay himself, realised, until he re-entered the homely circle the day before, all that a suspicion of his faithlessness would bring upon them, these people, so good and kind and true,—it had come upon him like a revelation in the dark watches of the night before. He could not, no, he could not, be more base than he had already been; and he set his teeth, and crushed down the hope that sprang up within, and reared its wicked head to look him in the face, when he marked the blush of anger on the father's cheek.

"Not at *all*!" he said, in accents that carried immediate conviction.

Mr Tufnell was mollified instantly. "Well, well, well!" he cried; "I did not think it—not for a moment: but young men are so peppery, one never knows——"

"I am not a young man, sir," said Jem Challoner, quietly.

"Not a young man? What are you, then? A Methuselah, I suppose? Come, come, you are out of sorts to-day. That business last night, that supper and nonsense, did not suit you. No more it did me. I like my meals regular; and nothing is worse than eating at odd times—snacks here and snacks there; and a supper at ten o'clock at night plays the very fury with a man's digestion. Did you have the lobster?" suddenly. "That's it! That's done it! Depend upon it, lobster will find you out, and make you pay damages. I would as soon eat the leather off my boot as touch a claw of a lobster at bedtime. And now I must really be off: I—let me see—where are those papers? Is it settled for February, then? Are you going to be a reasonable man?"

"I—I ought to be ashamed to—but—but——" stammered Chal-

loner, with inward resolution to have it out whatever might be the result. "You are very good, exceedingly good; but—but——"

"But, but," good-humouredly mimicked the banker. "Ay, that's it; there is always a 'but, but.' Well, here comes the old lady; we'll ask her what she has to say to it. Come, old lady, and tackle this refractory gentleman; he is too much for me; I haven't a chance with him. What do you think he wants now?—and that the very day after he arrives! And I that thought him a very model of patience and everything! Now he cries out that he must marry Mary off-hand! Ay, I thought I would make you jump. And so I am just telling him it can't be done."

"Why can't it be done?" said Challoner, turning to her. "There is no real reason, I presume, why there should be any delay. I am not taking your daughter far away; London is far away from no place. And as for preparations——"

"That's it; that's the thing, of course—the preparations. Why, my dear Mr Jem,—but, to be sure, I don't know how soon you mean," said she. "If you mean in six weeks, or maybe a month——"

"Aha! But he don't mean that; that would not suit his books at all. He means three weeks, or a fortnight; I believe it would have been one week, or to-morrow, with a word of encouragement. Now? What do you tell me now?" cried the husband, delighted to inflict his own previous discomfiture on his partner. "I believe he sees no earthly reason why he and Mary should not be spliced before noon to-morrow morning. It's too late to-day, luckily. Ha! ha! ha! And then he says Mary has not put him up to it on the sly," poking with his finger to point the jeer. "Tell

that to the marines, young sir. She may not have *said* anything,—there is no need for *saying* sometimes; there are ways and means without *saying*. You and she understand each other, I'll be bound."

"Ask her," said Challoner, quickly. His ear had caught a voice outside the door, and he opened it from within just as his betrothed was about to do the same from without. "Ask her. She does not even know my wishes; and I," he added, with his eyes on the ground—"I do not even know if she shares them."

"Wishes! What about?" inquired Mary, briskly. "What is going on here? La, Jem, what a face! I declare you look as if you were going to a funeral. What is the matter, you people?"

"A funeral, indeed!" cried her father, with a laugh. "'Tis not a funeral, but a wedding that's in the case, my girl. However, if a man is permitted to look glum when he is going to a funeral, he may, I suppose, give a scowl or so when he is *not* going to a wedding. *That* is what is the matter, miss. What have you to say to that?"

"Oh, indeed! A wedding? What wedding, papa?"

"It could not be his own, my dear, could it?"

"Indeed he does not look like it, papa."

"Indeed I was saying so, Mary."

"Come, come, you two; come, stop your nonsense, and give Jem his answer," put in Mrs Tufnell, good-humouredly. "'Tis but papa's way, Jem, you know—he must always have his joke; but 'enough's as good as a feast,' say I, and it is not fair to take a joke on too far. Tell Mary what Jem says, and then she will understand. And, papa, don't you bias her, but just let her speak for herself."

"But, mind, I don't promise to

go by what she says, whether she speaks for herself or not," rejoined the father, sturdily. "Howsoever, Mary—well, the fact is—I suppose you want to marry Mr Challoner here?"

"Papa! what a question!" and Miss Tufnell looked roguishly at her lover.

"Well—'papa,' indeed! I said I supposed you did. Now the thing is, will you have him now, or wait till you get him?"

He was irrepressible. He was in reality by no means displeased by what had occurred, as must have been already obvious; he was more, he was flattered and gratified beyond what he would have allowed to any one; only he meant to have his own way, and to have it with a blast of trumpets which should proclaim to all his victory.

He now exploded into a hearty laugh at his own wit, and Mrs Tufnell had again to tap and admonish. "Fie, fie! Now, papa, you really are too bad. I always do say that when papa gets into this joky humour, he really is too bad," apologetically to the silent stern man at the other end of the table. "Papa is a regular tease; and now poor Mary does not know what to think. I see I must take it in hand myself. It is whether you would like to have the wedding soon or by-and-by, Mary, my dear?"

"Soon? How soon, mamma?"

"Why, by the middle or end of next month—in about five weeks—or—or——" said Mrs Tufnell, stealing a suggestive glance across the table.

"In a fortnight, or less," replied Challoner, in a harsh resonant voice.

They all looked at him as he spoke. His tone was not like a bridegroom's.

"A fortnight! Good gracious!"

ejaculated Miss Tufnell, throwing up her hands. "My dear Jem! Mamma, do *you* tell him. Papa, you know you said it could not be," appealing to each in turn. "Why, I haven't ordered a *thing* yet—not a single thing. And now—oh, you don't know—but now it could never be, it could not possibly be, not for ever so long. I have heard such news; I was rushing in full cry to tell you all—I nearly ran all the way home, for I said I would be the first to get it out," the panting girl exclaimed, almost choking in her eagerness, as the rapture and excitement which had been momentarily suspended on her entrance by the introduction of another topic, now returned in full tide. (She did not see Jem raise his eyes, look at her, and drop them again, while the lines about his mouth seemed to deepen every moment. Neither she nor either of the others saw, all being otherwise engaged.) "Don't you wonder what it is?" cried the speaker, twirling round and round in a pirouette. "Guess, guess, guess, all of you. Try to guess any way, for you'll never do it. Oh my, I am in such a state! the others are writing off for patterns in the sitting-room now. Patterns! Doesn't *that* tell you? Patterns; what do people need patterns for? A—fancy—dress—" looking at each in turn.

"Ball!" cried her mother, solving the conundrum. "Ball! You don't say it?"

"But I do. That's it. There, it's out. Mrs Dobb is going to give a fancy-dress ball. And it has only just been arranged; and it is fixed for this day fortnight."

"That settles the question," said her father, drily.

"You cannot compete with a fancy ball, Mr Jem, you see," added his wife. "The girls have all been just wild to go to one;

and though, for myself, I am not so fond of being made a guy, still I'll not deny that for once and away I don't mind at Christmas time. 'Tis a pretty sight. And the Dobbs being our own particular friends——"

"Oh, ay, you'll want to go, no doubt," put in Mr Tufnell, affecting a fine shade of fatherly contempt. "'The Dobbs being our particular friends.' If the Dobbs had been our particular enemies, it would have been all the same to you. You must be on the gad-about——"

"Now, now," began she.

"Oh, papa, hold your tongue, and mamma too." (Again Challoner raised his eyes; the tone was not meant to be disrespectful, but it was,—he could not tell what it was. Never before had he seen his bride-elect show to less advantage; it might have been done of set purpose to mock him.) "Just you both be quiet, and I'll tell you about it," proceeded the young lady. "It has been on their minds this great while, Mrs Dobb says; but they knew it would make such an upset in the house, that they could never quite bring themselves to fix a time. But now Willie Dobb says it *is* to be; for he is *determined* upon it, and you know he can always do anything he likes with them all, once he is *determined*. And so when we met them, they began about it *at once*, and said they wanted us to know before any one else, because we *must* be there,—and if there had been anything to stop us, they would have changed the day. Mrs Dobb herself said that; she did indeed. 'Mary,' she said, 'tell your mother that if you could not all have come on *our* day, we would have changed the day.' So you see, papa, it was a shame to say it would have been all one if it had been our enemies. The Dobbs are always——"

"Just what I said. And no one knows it better than papa," subjoined her mother. "But he never meant nothing, Mary"—her own phraseology suffering from excitement and anticipation. "And Mary," eagerly, "what is Mrs Dobb going to wear herself? What is she going to *be*? Did you hear that? Did she tell you that? For I do declare I would not for the world that we should clash, she and I; and as we are the same stout figure, we might as like as not go and pitch on the very same thing. We must agree about it."

"You must agree to differ, eh?" said her husband, jocosely. "Eh, Jem? that wasn't bad, eh? Agree to differ. Hum—— Eh? Your nose is pretty well put out of joint by this, my friend, I take it. No one would give a thought to the bride, you see, if there were sham brides, Amazons, gipsies, what not, on the *tapis* as well. Mary is not going to lose the show either. Catch her being married and done for, and carted out of the way, when there is any jollification going on. No, no; not such a flat."

"I really couldn't, Jem," pleaded Mary, piteously.

"I suppose I ought not to ask it," said Challoner, with a bitter smile.

"Well, well; there's no harm done,—and don't quarrel over it you two," interposed Mrs Tufnell, a shade of anxiety showing itself in her voice as she looked at the last speaker. "Mary means no harm, Mr Jem; but she is just a girlie, and likes her play. You will enjoy the ball yourself. Dear me! it has put *me* all in a flutter. I will tell you what I will do, Mary," turning briskly to her daughter. "I will just step down to Mrs Dobb after lunch, before she can get out for the afternoon, and beg her to take it for granted

that I shan't be in her way whatever she decides on. That will be doing it handsome; and as it is Mrs Dobb who gives the ball, it is only fair that she should have first choice. And papa," to him, "you will not be stingy to the girls, you know. It is only once and away; we don't get the chance of a fancy ball every day, and fancy ball dresses are not to be had for nothing. Is the day quite fixed, fixed for certain, Mary?"

"Mrs Dobb was going to get the cards printed this very afternoon," said Mary.

"This very afternoon! The cards printed! Lor'! that does make it real. And she will be ordering her own dress, the next thing; as sure as I say it, she will,—and indeed I must see to my own, if ever Miss Flaxen is to send it in time. I'll not wait till the afternoon, I'll go now. There is plenty of time, if I go at once——" and she was hurrying away.

"I am to understand that you—that you would prefer to wait, then?" said Challoner to his betrothed,—and, in spite of every effort, his voice trembled under the variety of his emotions. "Is it so? Have I understood aright?"

"Why, of course; how could you have understood awrong?" retorted the young lady, with her usual vivacity. "Pray, Jem, don't say any more about it," added she, pettishly. "What is the use? You see father doesn't want it; no more does mother; no more do I. And I don't believe," with returning good temper,—“I don't believe you, in your heart of hearts, really want it yourself."

"Bravo! Mary. Did you hear that, mamma?" cried her father.

Challoner bowed; he could not speak. Once more fate had checkmated him, and the thing that he would have done he could not.

MORE REMINISCENCES OF A ROSS-SHIRE FOREST.

CHRISTOPHER NORTH says "shooting grouse after red deer, is like writing a sentiment in a lady's album after giving the finishing touch to a tragedy or an epic poem." The amount of pleasure derivable from writing in a lady's album depends, I should imagine, very much on who the proprietrix of the album in question may happen to be. It's about a quarter of a century since I experienced the sensation; and tragedies and epic poems being just a trifle beyond me, I am unable, with certainty, to say whether Christopher is correct or not. His meaning, no doubt, is this—that between deer-stalking and grouse-shooting there is a very wide gulf. Sometimes I almost wish I had left the rifle alone and stuck to the gun. With what delight in days of old I used to welcome that morning "when the prickly stubble tempts to the immortal Twelfth" (*sic* in a "society journal")! With what eagerness I used to read of the doings of others in 'The Field' or 'Bell's Life'—how Captain A. and Mr B., "shooting only from two till seven, the morning of the Twelfth being wet, killed five and a half brace of grouse and two blue hares"! How I sympathised with the captain and his friend on the wetness of the morning, and rejoiced with them over the five and a half brace of grouse—and the two blue hares! Now the proceedings of these gentlemen interest me no more.

Horatio Ross says deer-stalking is "the most fascinating of all British field-sports;" and he thus writes, after an experience of more than half a century in the forest.

The opinion is valuable, coming from one who, although his name for many, many long years has been identified only with that sport, and with rifle-shooting in general, used to hold his own with the very best of them in the old Melton days, and who rode the celebrated impromptu match against "The Squire" from Robertson Clump to Carlton Clump, in which both vanquisher and vanquished alike immortalised themselves.

Most people—for fox-hunters are a far more numerous body than deer-stalkers—will say with Mr James Pigg, "There's nout like huntin'." Mr Pigg probably never tried stalking. Moreover, he rode like a man, straight as a die from start to finish. How many do so? The inevitable six, eight, or ten, as the case may be, in every country; the remainder, by tearing down every lane, making for every gate, and "nicking in" at every corner,—riding dishonestly by day and lying systematically by night,—struggle to maintain a precarious reputation. To the straight-riding few, fox-hunting is indeed a glorious sport; to the great majority it is more pain than pleasure. "Why do they hunt, then?" Why? Simply to *dress*, and because it is considered the correct thing to do. "Look at that gen'lman there, sir," said an old hunstman to me at the covert-side one morning; "that's the sort o' gen'lman, sir, if you put him in a field and shut the gate he'd 'ave to stay there till some one let him out." Miserable and frightened the poor devil looked, still he was proud of himself withal. Just such another individual told me, on my remarking on his magnifi-

cent apparel, that his wife "liked him in a red coat."¹ After all, he couldn't have had a better reason for wearing one. Such swagger and imposture brings fox-hunting into disrepute; and for that reason, if for no other, I am at issue with Mr Pigg, and inclined to think that Christopher North and Horatio Ross do deer-stalking no more than justice when they speak of it in the terms they do.

In the columns of the 'Scotsman' some months ago, to come from the sublime to the ridiculous, appeared a letter signed "Scotus," treating of the depopulation in the Highlands, crofters, sheep farmers, and deer-stalkers. "Scotus" did not waste much time over the last-named class. The whole fraternity was summed up in the following sentence, remarkable at once for strength and elegance. "Deer-stalkers," he wrote, "are empty-headed wealthy fools, who . . . with arms of precision . . . shoot poor, silly, half-tamed stags." That deer-stalkers, if by the term the gentleman means lessees of forests, are rich, "goes without saying," as the Frenchman hath it. We'll grant him that with pleasure. That they are fools is a matter of opinion. There are other fools—to descend to this gentleman's level, and use the language with which no doubt he is most conversant—besides deer-stalkers, notably those who attempt to write on subjects

of which they are absolutely ignorant. (Taking a personal view of the matter, I may remark *en passant*, that although I have stalked a good many deer in my day, if I'm a fool at all, I claim to be a "poor fool.") That they shoot with "arms of precision," is equally true. The arms are as precise, at any rate, as Purdey, Grant, or Henry can make them;² but that they shoot "poor, silly, half-tamed stags," is indeed a marvellous piece of intelligence. Did "Scotus" write from his own personal experience—I am, I admit, curious to know—or whence did he derive his information? I should like much to see him turned out with his "arm of precision" in the wilds of Applecross or Auchnashellach, of Torridon, Kinlochewe or the Gairloch: he would return of an evening a good deal sorrier for himself than for the poor, silly, half-tamed stags with which in his ignorance he fancies such forests are stocked. The great majority of the population know nothing whatever of deer-stalking. They take their ideas on that subject, and I may say on most others, from the public press; and this letter would do, what doubtless it was intended to do, a very considerable amount of harm to deer-stalkers. Now "Scotus" either believed what he wrote or he did not. If he did, such ignorance, seeing the works that have ap-

¹ Talking of red coats, I was walking one day with a fair one by the "sad sea waves," in a part of the country where golf—that grand old game—had, not long previously, broken out with extraordinary virulence. She was very short-sighted—her only defect—and was much puzzled by seeing four scarlet men together, bearing down on us. "What *are* those fellows?" she said, putting her glass to her eye, and looking at them long and earnestly. "What *are* those fellows? they can't all be earth-stoppers!"

² Between such men as I have named and several others of the first class there is little or nothing to choose; but I must say, that of all the rifles I have tried, I prefer those by the last-named maker. "Good wine requires no bush," and Mr Henry needs no recommendation from me; but when one meets with an exceptionally good article it is only fair to say so.

peared on the subject by Scrope, St John, Colquhoun, MacRae, and others, would be discreditably in a cab-driver; and he is about as capable of writing on deer and deer-stalking as I should be of editing the 'Charivari' after a fortnight's residence in Paris. If he did not, why did he make such statements, and why did the editor of the 'Scotsman' allow such trash to appear in his columns? You give it up? Don't do that, the question is easy of solution. Both these gentlemen had excellent reasons for acting as they did. A youth in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell Green being asked of what profession his father was, replied, "He's a hagitator." It's not a bad profession that of the "hagitator" nowadays; and after all, one must make a living somehow—and a very fair living can be made, apparently, if 37,000 guineas is the result of a few years' exertions in this line.

Perhaps by a perusal of the following anecdote, "Scotus," and others with a like amount of information, may learn something of a sport of which they know nothing.

One day in October last I was told off to the "home beat" to remain at the lodge, and shoot the "drawing-room windowstag." This sounds pleasant and domestic, but the term requires explanation. In the home beat was comprehended a hill rising in front of the lodge to over 3000 feet in height, a favourite resort of deer. All one side, except the "big burn" and a deep corrie over "the shoulder," was visible from the drawing-room windows, hence the term; and by aid of a powerful telescope, fixed on swivels, we could sweep the whole hill, and make up our minds how to approach the deer, should any be in sight, before ever leaving the lodge-door. That morning, with-

out much difficulty, we made out a fair stag with some hinds lying half-way up the hill; but although four other glasses besides the big telescope were brought into requisition, we failed to discover anything else.

"He's good enough for me, Donald," I said—"we'll be off;" and accompanied by Donald and other two men, off I went.

The wind could not possibly have been worse, but by making a wide circuit to our right, going to the very top of the hill, and coming down some hundreds of yards beyond where the deer lay, we were confident we should be too many for them. We left the lodge about half-past eight in a sweltering hot morning, and in an hour and a half thereafter we were on the top of the hill shivering in two or three inches of snow. Several times on the way up we halted and spied the hill most carefully; but it was evident—so we concluded—that the deer we were stalking were the sole representatives of their species in the neighbourhood. Crawling gently over the sky-line we began to descend the hill in single file. We hadn't gone far till, to our intense surprise, we saw the stag with his hinds coming into view from behind a dark ledge of rocks far away to our right.

"What has moved them, Donald?" I asked.

"I cannot make out, sir," was the reply.

We did not wish to disturb the ground they were making for, so we determined to give it up. We looked the "big burn" carefully on our way back, but discovered nothing, and got home again, very much disgusted, about three o'clock. Entering the drawing-room, I found "the lady of the forest" engaged in the study of the 'Morning Post.'

Looking up from her paper, she remarked, "Well, you've made a pretty mess of it,"—a pleasant greeting to the baffled deer-stalker.

"Might I ask how?" I replied, bringing myself to anchor in an easy-chair.

"You went too near the deer—that's all; and they winded you."

"Pardon me, madam," I rejoined, acrimoniously; "they did not."

"Why, I saw them bolt," she said. "When you disappeared over 'the shoulder,' I kept my eye on the deer (through the telescope, of course), and not five minutes afterwards up jumped the big stag."

"The what?" I said, imitating the animal in question and jumping on my legs.

"The big stag," she continued, "and the one below him, looked in your direction, and were off; then the deer lower down bolted too."

Now, as the reader has no doubt ere this discovered, we hadn't an idea that those two stags were there at all. They were not visible from the lodge when we started, nor from any point of the route we took to reach the top of the hill. They winded us without doubt, although we could not have been within three-quarters of a mile of them.¹ The other deer, I am confident, did not wind us; but seeing the stags above startled, the hint was quite sufficient, and *saute qui peut* was the order of the day with them also. Unless a lovely blue eye at the end of a telescope had been watching the proceedings, we should never have known from that day to this what had happened. How tame those deer are, and how

easy of approach, the reader may judge for himself.

Had "Scotus" written against deer "driving,"—more particularly as practised by one man in the Highlands, who has made for himself a most unenviable reputation,—I should have endorsed every word he wrote; but that sport—if sport it is—is as much to be compared to deer-stalking as "bobbing" for eels at Lea Bridge to fishing for salmon in "Sprouston Dub."

Reluctantly I take leave of this elegant writer of fiction, and turn for a moment to the columns of the 'Spectator.' In August last a contributor—suppose we call him "Spectator"—writing of the Highlands, delivers himself as follows: "No fence or boundary meets the eye, and the unaccustomed tourist, thinking no wrong, joyfully starts to climb a hill and enjoy a larger prospect, when suddenly, like the followers of Roderick Dhu, a gamekeeper starts up with the unwelcome information—No road this way; this hill is preserved. Formerly, the unenclosed hillsides were open to every comer, and no damage was done; *in fact, it was not possible to do any damage to mere stone or heather.*" (The italics are my own.) Quite right, "Spectator;" your conclusion is logical; and, as far as stone and heather are concerned, you would, by walking across the hillsides, do about as much damage as the boot of the "masher" out for a stroll does to the pavement of Piccadilly. There are many hillsides I am acquainted with across which you might march the 88th Regiment of Foot

¹ MacRae puts a mile as about the limit of a deer's scenting power; but, as he says, a great deal depends on the nature of the ground, and how the wind is blowing. If steadily and strongly, with nothing to interrupt its passage, you would not, I am sure, be safe at that distance.

(now the "14th Battalion, 13th Brigade, South-Western Irish, Teck's Own Territorial" (Ballinasloe Bouncers),¹ and no one would ever discover they'd been there, barring they left a few empty whisky-bottles on the road—not an improbable contingency. The selfishness and narrow-mindedness of sportsmen in preventing tourists and others from crossing their forests—on which, presumably, "Spectator" is descanting—has been written of *ad nauseam* for the last twenty years; and here we have a gentleman contributing an article on the subject to a presumably widely read weekly paper, the editor of which appears satisfied therewith, or it would have found its way to the waste-paper basket, and he absolutely does not know what the argument all these long years has been about. An evening paper made its appearance some time ago, purporting to be written "by gentlemen for gentlemen." Most papers are written by a class for a class—the 'Morningside Mirror,'² for example; and on the hypothesis that the production of "Spectator" is by an imbecile for imbeciles, it is quite comprehensible, but on no other, for greater trash printer's devil never put together. If you walk across a forest, my dear "Spectator," you won't, as you very sagaciously observe, hurt the stones or heather—who out of Hanwell ever said you would?—

but you will frighten the deer off the place; they will see you or smell you—you or any one else, I mean—a tourist by any other name would smell as strong,—not only that, but they won't cross your track for hours together. You stop them as effectually as if you built a stone wall. "Gross exaggeration." Oh no, it isn't. I've proved it time after time. I've seen a stag so terrified by a track that, rather than cross it, he preferred coming back to where a shot had been fired not twenty minutes before; and he came back once too often too.

Some years ago, the box-seat of a coach running on a well-known Highland route was occupied by a gentleman tourist and his wife.

"What is the vast extent of barren waste lying on either side, coachman?" asked the lady of the driver, an old ex-gillie.

"That, mem, is his lordship's deer-forest."

"What lord, coachman?"

Old Donald, after driving fifty yards in silence, jerked out in a "I-thought-every-one-knew-that-anyway" sort of tone, "Bread-albane!"

"But, coachman, there are no trees."

"A forest, mem, is a place where there is no trees," was the reply.

Not so laid down in "Walker" or "Johnson," but true, neverthe-

¹ The simplicity of such a title must recommend itself to every one. We are credibly informed that there is not now a colonel in the service who could not, if requested to do so, give the correct designation of his regiment without a moment's hesitation—a marvellous improvement on olden times, when no one ever knew the difference between the 41st and 42d, and when we always mixed up the 71st with the 74th.

² Morningside is one of the suburbs of Edinburgh, where a pleasant retreat, similar to that at Colney Hatch, is situated. It is here that the Modern Athenians, who, from putting too much water to their whisky, or from some other reason to the author unknown, have gone wrong in the head, are taken care of. A small magazine, ycleped the 'Mirror,' is written and published by the inmates.

less. The remains of trees are there; the trees themselves are conspicuous by their absence.

Lady, after a consultation with her consort, "But—er—ah—coachman, there are no deer. We don't see *any* deer, coachman."

"The deer may be there, mem, though you do not see the deer."

Old Donald having mystified his hearers very considerably, and finished the flask handed to him in a moment of weakness, became pleasantly communicative.

"It was just here, mem," he observed, "that she was upset last year, at the corner forrit there. It was that horse on the near side, mem, that fell down—(whack!)—he's a nesty prute—(whack! whack!) There was a gentleman, he wad come frae aboot London, he had his leg proken, mem; and me and Mr M'Spinach,¹ that's him o' the inn, we wad carry him up and doon the stairs thegither. He wad lie for aboot fower months, mem; he was a nice gentleman whatever."

That was a thoroughly enjoyable drive, and the scenery was much appreciated.

"The deer may be there, mem, though you do not see the deer."

And this is my contention. At that time of the year when tourists most do congregate in the Highlands—say, from August first to September twentieth, they—the deer, not the tourists—frequent the tops of the hills, and are quite invisible to inexperienced eyes, and generally to experienced ones too without a glass. Say that the "unaccustomed tourist," with a few friends, starts to climb a hill, the deer may be retreating before

them, and they may be in total ignorance of the fact. On that day when I went out after the "drawing-room window stag," two deer retreated before us, and two dozen might have done the same. Yet there were four of us, each with a glass over his shoulder, going out with the sole object of looking for them, and carefully spying the ground as we advanced. "We assured him we had seen no deer," writes another indignant Briton. Conclusive, certainly!

The Highlands, and the condition of their inhabitants, are now engrossing public attention. The whole question requires a very much abler head than I have on my shoulders—or, I am bold enough to say, than "Spectator" has on his—to solve. Whether Highland proprietors are acting wisely or properly in "foresting," to the extent they are doing, I am unable to determine; but as long as forests are to let, and the laws of the land remain as they are, I fail to see why "Spectator" has any more right to enter my forest in the north, than I should have to enter his coverts in the south; or any more right to drive the deer off my ground, than I should have to drive the pheasants off his. But to follow him still further, "liberty to stroll through the forests, to climb the mountains, freedom to roam over barren moors without being checked and bullied by the underlings of the shooting tenant, will give contentment." This is very beautiful; but *until* those halycon days arrive, I recommend "Spectator" to stick to the roads, and tempt the fates no more. He may get some rough handling from the underlings he

¹ The clan M'Spinach (tartan, dark green, with yolk-of-egg yellow stripes) is now extinct.

writes of, and his "16s. trousers" torn—possibly in an unromantic spot,—I am not writing of the scenery,—or the unmentionables in question may take leave of him altogether. He may find himself converted into a ready-made Highlander, cut off from his "appy home at Mairdar 'ill or 'ighbury," and stuck up at the snuff-shop door—a warning to all ignorant tourists of advanced principles.

But we have wasted too much time over these gentlemen. Let us travel up to Ross-shire again, and do a little business together in a sportsmanlike way. Come on, "Scotus," and "Spectator"; step out and see the fun; leave your venom and ignorance behind. Highland gillies are grand weight-carriers, but a camel himself would shy at such a cargo.

My first day's stalking last year was in the beautiful forest of —, not far from where they riot of a Sunday. I knew nothing of the ground, and nothing of the men who were with me—the head forester and a young gillie, named respectively Murdoch and John. It was my first appearance in that part of Ross-shire. We had a long tiring walk before seeing anything, then we came on a good stag; but, to my disgust, I was told he was over the march. "He seems a real good beast that, Murdoch," I remarked; "I should like to see more of him;" and forthwith, getting hold of a large stone, I sent it rolling down the hill. We rolled down stone after stone—some of them started by young John being of tremendous dimensions; but beyond raising his head now and then, the stag took no notice whatever. This is not so surprising as at first sight it may seem. Rocks are constantly rolling down the hillsides, espe-

cially in winter after a hard frost, and the deer get quite accustomed to the noise, and evidently regard it as nothing unusual. We altered the face of nature very considerably. You would have thought there had been a second edition of the recent commotion in Java; but it was all of no use, so we decided on sending John round to give the stag his wind, trusting that when started he might eventually come our way. Deer, if they catch a glimpse of you, or of anything they don't understand, invariably stop and look, perhaps for a couple of minutes—it may be much longer—till they reassure themselves, or till they decide there is danger. When they wind you they scarcely pause one second,—they know their enemy is there, and they are off like a shot. This deer was no exception to the rule. As soon as John crossed him he went with a will, and went the wrong way too; so with a faint curse I turned my head homewards, or rather after the men, for in what direction homewards lay, I knew not. Seeing, as I thought, that sport was pretty well over for the day, as soon as I descried "the shepherd's house" in the distance, I forged gradually ahead, and was beating "record time," I fancy, over that part of the hill, when I was pulled up by a "Hist!" in rear,—a sound somewhat similar to that affected by "Knights of the Napkin" when they wish suddenly to arrest the career of a professional friend with the mustard-pot. When one has passed season after season in the forest, one gets tolerably "'cute" at seeing or hearing signals. Down I dropped in the heather, with my head twisted over my shoulder in the attitude of a well-broken pointer, when he suddenly finds himself on the very top of birds

where he least expects them. Both men had dropped also close together, and were now directing my attention to a deer—stag or hind, I couldn't make out which with the naked eye—far away down below us, feeding by the burn. Carefully retreating two or three hundred yards, we turned our glasses down the hill. Three stags and ten hinds met our view. Still retreating some six or eight hundred yards to get the wind right, at last we turned and made for the prey. Before we had progressed very far—"Ye had better be getting her ready," I heard Murdoch whisper to John.

"Keep the rifle in the cover," I said; "we're not within three hundred yards of the deer."

A short way farther on there was another whispering and another fumbling with the cover. Again I put the veto on their operations. At length, after some careful crawling, we got within easy shot. All three stags were together not eighty yards off, down rather a steep hill-face. Crawling forward with Murdoch I took a look at them. Shivering with excitement he handed me the rifle.

"Shoot, if you please, sir," he whispered.

"If I put the rifle over that rock, the stag—the best one, at which I meant to fire first—will see it instantly," I said.

"If you please, shoot, sir," was the reply.

"A nice sort of a cove you are," I said to myself, "to keep an elderly gentleman, tottering on the verge of two score years and ten, cool under trying circumstances,—a lot of Boers you would hit if they were coming up the hill in front of

us;" and totally disregarding the rifle, I crept forward again leisurely to make up my mind which stag I should take next, in the event of my killing the first. Having decided, and seeing there was no other rock available for a good rest but the one in front of me,¹ I took up the rifle, and cautiously pushing the barrel over the rock, prepared to take aim. Instantly up jumped a hind; but I was too quick for the stag, for I shot him dead before he could get on his legs. Turning my attention to the next, I rolled him over as he was making off at his best pace. Good stags they were both, of sixteen and fifteen stone respectively.

Now I claim this to be an instructive anecdote. Had I allowed myself to be bothered and hustled by Murdoch—head man in a well-known forest too, forsooth—these deer would probably be feeding in that forest at the present moment. If you can only reach the stage at which I have arrived (my trumpeter, never a robust man, and whose office for many years back had been almost a sinecure, succumbed to the severe winter of 1879-80, since which time I have had to do the work myself)—if you can only reach the stage of having a quiet talk over the deer, making up your mind how you will shoot them, and never taking the rifle in your hand until you have made up your mind, you ought to kill about nineteen out of every twenty you fire at. It is very difficult—in a forest where you find yourself for the first or second season, almost impossible—to stalk deer yourself. Let the men do their part of the work—and most admirably they do it—take you up to the quarry;

¹ No one who knows anything of gunnery would rest the rifle actually on the rock.

but as soon as you are there—if you have any confidence in yourself—take the “head of the column.” My experiences may be peculiar, but I have never yet met but one “common man” who could keep absolutely cool in presence of a good stag—they all take “the shakes”; nothing is so catching, except the measles, as nervousness. A sudden panic comes on. “He’ll be off, sir!”—the rifle is thrust into your hand, and the only chance you may have during the day most effectually spoilt. I say the only chance advisedly.

“The Hon. A. B. went into the forest and killed five stags.” Such is the sort of announcement one occasionally meets with in the columns of ‘The Field’; and a very pleasant and entertaining day the honourable gentleman must have had. Now we don’t do that sort of thing where I learned to stalk. “Have you got him?” is the inquiry of your anxious friends as you deliver yourself, cold, wet, and weary, and late for dinner, at the lodge-door. You reply in the affirmative, and the news is instantly in the dining-room. If you can only add, “and another good one also,” the excitement is intense. Instantly “the wires are set in motion”—I mean they are removed from the necks of the bottles; pop! pop! go the corks, and “harmony, conviviality, and good-fellowship,” as in the old days at Jemmy Shaw’s, “reign supreme.”

A celebrated physician was once on a time troubled with a lady patient who was inordinately fond of cucumber. She ate cucumber by day and cucumber by night—made a regular cucumber-frame of herself—till a constitution, originally vigorous, began to be seriously impaired. The doctor tried entreaties, then threats—it was all

of no use. At last an original idea struck him. “If you will only follow my receipt for the preparation of your favourite vegetable—or fruit, is it?” he said to the lady, “you may use as much as ever you like.” “If you think it would be better for me,” said the patient; and this is the receipt he gave her: “Cut the cucumber into thin slices, pour some vinegar over it—not too much; put it before the fire till the slices are thoroughly heated through, then open the window and—throw it into the area.” Now this is not a desperately funny story—I admit that—and I don’t think I laughed over it quite as much perhaps as I ought to have done; moreover, it is not particularly new, for, if I mistake not, you will find it among the writings of Joe Miller; but it has given me an idea. Say that I was teaching a young hand to stalk, here’s the advice I should give him.

Before starting in the morning, look your rifle very carefully over. Don’t trust this to any one else. See that it has been properly cleaned, and that the breech-action is right; then put it in its cover, and—leave it at home. Go out at first with your glass alone, in company with a good man. Try how near you can get to the deer; lie and watch them, and study their habits. Deer, when feeding, will often raise their heads suddenly, and look, it may be quite accidentally, in your direction. Watch them steadily, which you’ll be able to do if you have left your rifle at home, and in another minute or two you’ll probably see them begin to feed again. Follow them up all day; try to stalk them in sight—not such a difficult thing as many people imagine. If you are dressed properly, and always keep a back-

ground of rock or heather, you'll be surprised to find what you can do. By following such tactics for a while, you will shoot like a sportsman when the time comes, and very many fewer noble beasts will be left to hobble about on three legs in the forests of Scotland, or to linger out a miserable existence behind some ledge of rock whither they have crept, sorely stricken, to die.

And now, whilst I've been giving all this good advice, "little Duncan" has been waiting impatiently at "the stable." Pacing up and down in front of the door, every now and then he raises his glass and takes an anxious look down the road.

"They're terrible late this morning," he mutters; for Duncan had been up at daybreak and already knew *where they were*.

The day seemed further advanced to him than to me, for I was punctual almost to a minute. About half-past eight I jumped out of the trap.

"Well, Duncan," I asked, "any chance to-day?"

"There is a good chance, sir," he said, quietly.

I saw he was not disposed to lose any time; so, giving him the rifle, I put my sandwich and cartridge case in my pocket, and taking my stick, we were off in a couple of minutes. I was sure by his manner he had *something* definite in view; and going up the hill, he gave me the information I knew would be forthcoming before we had gone far.

"I have seen some deer this morning, sir," he said, "near the march; we will not lose much time." And spying the ground in front and on either side, to see that we were leaving nothing behind or driving anything before us

to take those we knew of off our dominions, we made for "the river" as rapidly as possible.

"Could you see what the deer were like, Duncan?" I asked, presently.

"No, sir, I could not; it was too early in the morning. But there were a good many hinds, and two stags with them."

I knew exactly from his description where they were; and after a walk of four miles, we stopped, by mutual consent, at the top of the brae leading down to the river. One deer only was visible from where we stood, and his head was not in sight; but the instant I got the glass on him—"If that's not a good stag," I said to myself, "I never saw one." Moving carefully down the hill we brought his head into view.

"He's the very stag, sir!" said Duncan.

"What stag?" I asked, eagerly.

"The one I was telling you about, sir, that Mr C—— and I saw a fortnight since; there's not another like him in the forest!"

Little did I then imagine the day's work this gentleman was going to give us; as little did I imagine the bad counsel and bad temper I was going to have a specimen of. Yes; I'll show you up, Duncan. A worse counsellor, or a sulkier little beggar than you were that day, it has never been my misfortune to meet. But to proceed. We soon made out, as we thought, all the deer he had seen in the morning—six hinds and another stag,—a very good beast too. They were restless and suspicious—why, we could not discover; but by careful generalship we very soon got, say, to within 130 yards of the big stag. He was standing behind a low rock

looking straight in our direction, and I could only see his head and a bit of his chest. To my surprise, Duncan handed me the rifle.

"I'll miss him, to a moral certainty," I whispered.

"No fear, sir," was the reply; "you've killed many a worse chance than that."

"Never take a very difficult chance, as long as you have some hours of daylight to come and go on."¹

Here was an opportunity again of putting my theory into practice. "I won't fire at him," I said, decisively. Taking the rifle in his hand, without a word, Duncan began to creep forward. I followed. We hadn't gone ten yards till a hind—there were seven, unfortunately, instead of six—caught sight of us and ran down the hill.

"The hind has seen you, sir," said Duncan, in a most unchristian-like tone of voice.

"Possibly," I said, "after she saw you."

Duncan hadn't the slightest idea the hind was there any more than I had. The stag didn't quite know what had happened (there were large rocks all over the ground). I am not sure that he saw the hind at all; but he saw or heard something, and began to move off slowly, constantly looking back in our direction. Presently he stopped full broadside on. "Now, sir," said Duncan, again handing me the rifle. Again I refused to fire. I am confident I could have hit him even at that distance, a very long 200 yards I should have called it; but that wasn't the "pint," as Mr Biggar says,—the "pint" was this: Was I likely to kill him? I thought the chances much against such a result.

"He won't stop short of 'The Sanctuary' now," (about five miles off,) said Duncan, looking as black as thunder.

"He'll not go a quarter of a mile," I replied; and I was right. In a very few minutes we were up to them again—to the two stags and six hinds; the other hind did not reappear on the scene. Scarcely startled at all, they were preparing to lie down, which they did while we were looking at them. I was desperately eager to shoot the stag straight off, make a pulpit of his carcass, and preach a sermon to Duncan on the art of killing red deer in the Highlands of Scotland; but it was not to be yet awhile. It was the 29th of September, a very cold day, with a bitter north wind, and now about half-past eleven o'clock. The deer were quite unapproachable where they were; so imitating their example, we lay down together. Twelve o'clock came, and one—two, three, and four—and we were still in our respective positions. It was awfully cold work, but Duncan's bad temper had left him,—that was one comfort. We lay close together, every now and again taking a longing look at the big head just visible above the heather about three hundred yards off, discussed her Majesty's Ministers, individually and collectively,—we soon disposed of that lot,—and then took to the old familiar theme—"stag talk," which we stuck to for the remainder of the day. "D'ye mind the ten-pointer in '79, Duncan?" I asked. Duncan laughed. (That gentleman we came on about 9 A.M. on the last day of the season, the 10th of October. He had seventeen hinds with him; and after trying twice, without

¹ Those words of wisdom I spoke in my first Reminiscences.

success, to get near him—at ten o'clock and about two—I shot him at 5 P.M. After missing him right and left, I rammed in another cart-ridge, and rolled him over stone-dead, just as he was disappearing from view. A very close shave, indeed.) About five o'clock things began to look better. Up got the hinds and stretched themselves. "We'll get a chance soon now," said Duncan, as we rose with difficulty, chilled and stiff from our long lie; but our troubles weren't over yet. Led by a frolicsome old virgin, they began to move away at a great pace, cantering up the steep ledges of rock, stopping, then cantering on again (I never saw deer undisturbed go so fast), followed reluctantly by the stags a hundred yards behind, Duncan and I, dodging in and out among the rocks, and bringing up the rear. They all halted on the sky-line in front of us. Magnificent the big stag looked in such a position! "We'll find them in the corrie, sir," said Duncan, as they disappeared from view. But no; when we got there they were nowhere to be seen. We made several short casts to no effect.

"All is lost but honour," I said to myself. "And the question is, whether that hasn't gone too."

This story will improve in the telling, I thought, and I began to fear I had immortalised myself in a very undesirable fashion.

Duncan was fairly puzzled. "They can't have turned and gone down the hill," he said, bringing his glass to bear as a last resource on a little gully half a mile below, to our left rear.

Closing it almost as soon as it reached his eye, he seized the rifle.

"Come on, sir," he said, "we'll have him yet!"

This time, as before, the big stag was the only one of them in sight; had he gone twenty yards further we could not have seen him. It was a wonderful piece of luck, more especially as it was now nearly six o'clock.

The sides of this little gully were very steep, almost perpendicular, but I knew we could get close up to him; and as we went along I made up my mind how I should shoot him. It would be impossible to get a rest for the rifle, I saw—no opportunity for a talk over him this time—nothing but a quick shot from the shoulder will serve. Taking the rifle from Duncan when we got near, I saw to the stops, then motioning him to creep forward and ascertain exactly where the stag was, I stood ready for action. Putting his cap in his pocket as usual,¹ Duncan crawled along very cautiously; inch by inch he pushed his head over the rock, then almost immediately shrinking backwards, I knew at once that the stag was just below him. Imitating his movements, I crawled forward till I got beside him, when, giving up his place to me, he drew back a few yards. Holding the rifle ready, I rose to my feet on the edge of the cliff. The stag was not forty yards off, feeding, with his head down hill. Instantly catching sight of me, he turned it over his shoulder. What a head it was! Scarcely inferior to *the* stag of last year. An earnest look he gave me, but he hadn't much time to satisfy his curiosity—in went a bullet behind his ribs, crashing right down through him, and at ten minutes past six I was master of the field. *Never trust*

¹ Not a prudent thing to do. No *chevelure*, unless of a very peculiar hue, can be half as good a colour to raise over a rock or a sky-line as a neutral-tinted cap.

a stag that falls suddenly to the shot; and not knowing then where the bullet had entered, I kept my eye on him for a few seconds till Duncan's cheery voice, "He's all right, sir," showed me the precaution was unnecessary.

Thus ended in a very satisfactory manner a very trying day.

That night I was called upon for a full, true, and particular account of the events of the day. When I was about the middle of the narrative——

"You should have fired at him when first you saw him. I should have done so most certainly," spluttered a youth of four-and-twenty summers through a mouthful of filberts.

"Really, my lad," I replied; "now that's exactly the course I believe you would have adopted."

Not knowing exactly whether this was intended to be complimentary or the reverse, the youth held his tongue, and I was allowed to finish my story. I thought perhaps his powerful brain was at rest, but such was not the case: he was cogitating deeply.

"But," he suddenly ejaculated again, after a considerable interval, "if you had killed that stag at eleven, you might have got another afterwards."

Seeing the quarter whence it emanated, and that it was filtered through a couple of pounds of nuts, six or eight apples, and a water-melon, the remark showed a considerable amount of intelligence; but whether or not I was right in refusing to fire when I had little or no hope of "bringing off" the shot,—in again holding my hand, when a wounded stag and a long stern-chase — Duncan first "and the rest nowhere"—would, I anticipated, be the result (try that once or twice, gentle reader, and

tell me how you like it),—in judging for myself when I felt assured bad advice was being given me—in waiting patiently, hour after hour—in following up the stag and killing him in what I claim to have been a sportsmanlike manner,—I leave to my readers to determine.

Next morning the youth above mentioned, full of confidence and cold grouse, marmalade and "mild York," started about 8.30 A.M. to slaughter the red deer in the forest. About 8.30 P.M. he returned a sadder, and, let us hope, a wiser youth.

"You didn't get a shot, then?" I asked, sympathetically.

"Oh yes, I did," the youth replied; "but, just like my d—d luck, the brute bolted behind a rock as I was firing, and I missed him."

"How very unfortunate!" I said. "And you saw nothing else?" I asked, pursuing my inquiries.

"Yes, I had another shot," was the reply; "but, just like my d—d luck, it was in the dark—couldn't see the sights on my rifle, and of course I missed him."

"Of course," I chorussed, more sympathetically than before.

"We watched the brute for a long while afterwards," continued the youth. "He went like the very devil at first; then we saw him stop in the corrie; but, just like my d—d luck, he went on again."

The lights and shadows on the Scottish hills have often been depicted. What would a landscape-painter have given for such a scene! the stag almost invisible to the naked eye, yet seen distinctly through the glass more than a mile off. You think the youth exaggerated, or made some mistake in the time?

I am very glad indeed to be able to give you a satisfactory explanation. We have all of us heard of animals wonderfully fleet of foot, especially on the other side of the Atlantic, doing a distance in "less than no time." This stag went, as we have been informed, "like the very devil." He left the youth's company at six, and he got to the corrie at half-past five.

"Never trust a stag that falls suddenly to the shot." Remember that, if you take my advice; and thereby hangs a tale. There was a man at the lodge who answered to the name of "old John." John had a lean head, well set on, as they say of a colt by Stockwell, and excellent legs (none of your fatted calves—they're no good), like most colts by such a sire. He wasn't within ten years of the age he looked; and between you and me, there were few better men about the place. He seldom got out on "the hill"—much to his disgust, for he was very keen—his duties consisting in attending on the children when they went fishing, helping in the deer larder, finishing the fag-ends of the bottles as they came out of the dining-room, and making himself generally useful. He was fond of snuff and stimulants; for the "Blue-Ribbon Army" he had a sincere and sovereign contempt; and our ideas coinciding—except the snuff—we used to be as happy when we got out together as if we'd been at Rosherville; and if we didn't kill anything else, we always killed the day to our mutual satisfaction.

One year, when I arrived from the south, every one was out fishing, grouse-shooting, or deer-stalking; but a message was left for me, saying, if I cared about it, I might take "old John" and go out on

Ben S—. I didn't feel up to much that morning, having been travelling all night with a convivial sportsman, whom I picked up at Perth. Still I got ready with alacrity, and so did John. (A more perfect specimen of the "travelling companion" than that was, it has never been my good fortune to meet. He had with him a plentiful supply of the cup which cheers but doth not inebriate—I allude to the "Perrier Jouet Sec"—and the way that journey slipped by was quite wonderful. Blair Atholl, Kingussie, and Aviemore were left behind in rapid succession. We sailed past the Boat of Garten, and found ourselves on the platform at Inverness before we knew where we were. Then the parting came. Both were "visibly affected." "You'll look me up, old chap," I said, as I wrung his hand, "when you come my way?" "You may rely upon my doing so," he said with a gentle hiccup; and "he went on his way, and I saw him no more:" but never having told him, as it occurred to me afterwards, where "my way" was, he has not yet made his appearance. Should these lines meet his eye, let him know he is still remembered with affection—though "lost to sight," he is indeed "to memory dear.") The way you and I, indulgent reader, hop from parenthesis to parenthesis, reminds one of the gyrations of a jack-snipe in a peat-hag. (What a wonderful little bird is that small *scolopax*, or jack-snipe! If you're fortunate enough to miss him once or twice in the morning, he'll afford you a very fair day's sport.) (Another parenthesis, by Jupiter!) (and that's another!) Period.

As far as I recollect, when we got off the line—or on to it, rather—"old John" and I were just start-

ing on our little holiday together. As we were walking down to "the loch,"—"Is there any chance to-day, John, do you think?" I inquired.

"Well, sir," said John, very slowly, "there might be a chance, or there might not,"—an answer which would do credit to a Cabinet Minister at an international crisis. It didn't give me much information, but I saw from the way he was stepping out, that he was pretty confident. Reaching the loch, we jumped into the boat and pulled across, then after a stiff walk of four miles up "the burn," we commenced business. In half an hour's time I had killed a stag: knocking him over with the right barrel, I finished him with the left. He was a wretched, rubbishy, "rotten-topped" brute, barely twelve stone weight; but as he was the first of the season—"the first pale primrose of the coming spring"—I was very glad to get him. John was perfectly delighted. Throwing off his coat, and turning up his sleeves, he "gralloched" him in an incredibly short space of time; then resuming his tattered garment, he swallowed at one gulp a large dose of alcohol, which I prescribed, and with a "pech" of satisfaction eagerly inquired—

"What time would it be, sir, if you please?"

"It's not three o'clock yet, John," I replied.

"We'll have anither whatever," he said; and shouldering the rifle, he stepped out with all the elasticity of youth.

It did not look like it for a while; but at last, about six o'clock, John, who was twenty yards in advance—I was getting pretty well done—suddenly drew back, then lying down on his face, he peered cautiously into the depths below. He

lay perfectly still till I got up to him, then rising, he shook the snuff-drops from his mane,—I'm getting poetical—but nose is the word I wanted,—and gracefully wiping the member in question with the back of his hand, he quietly drew the rifle from its cover.

"He's a good beast," he whispered, with a chuckle.

Crawling quietly forward, I looked over. There, about eighty or ninety yards below, in a pretty little grassy basin, lay a stag. Glancing over my shoulder at John with a reassuring smile, I put the rifle over a rock in front, took a steady aim, and missed the beast as clean as a whistle! Up he jumped, much surprised at the noise, when in went the second barrel, slap into the middle of his back, and down he fell.

"What a shot!" said John. "Splendid!—two stags in one day! What a shot!" and seating himself on the rock, he pulled his flask from his pocket—an old medicine-bottle, holding about an imperial pint—and extracting the cork, he "elevated his elbow" with quickness and dexterity. The vessel was empty, as he well knew, but the hint was sufficient, and I handed him mine. "What a shot!" he repeated. "Splendid! If it wasn't that late we'd have anither—splendid! He's very near a royal stag." The brute wasn't much better than the first, and had only six points; but the day was far advanced, and twice six, as most of us know, make twelve.

Meanwhile, like a couple of idiots—I beg your pardon, John—we had taken no pains whatever to keep out of sight. The stag, poor beast, began to drag himself along the ground, like a wounded hare, his hind legs being quite paralysed. I stretched out my hand for the

rifle. "Don't spoil him, sir," said John. (Oh, John, John!) He then came to a perpendicular rock six or eight feet high, down which he fell, and lay at the bottom with his legs in the air, like a sheep. When next I turned my eyes on him he was going round the corner at a very fair trot, and we never saw him from that day to this!¹ I am sorry to conclude with such a tale of imbecility.

On reading over what I have written, I find I have used the word "tourist," it may be thought by some in a disparaging sense, and I may have given offence when I certainly did not mean it. If so, I am heartily sorry. I have heard, I am ashamed to say, men who ought to know better sum up the whole class much as "Scotus" summed up deer-stalkers—as "d—d snobs of tourists"—a piece of silly unmannerly impertinence, redounding only on the utterer thereof. Year after year I meet many tourists in the north in search of health and relaxation. May they get what they go to seek! Keen fishermen, keen naturalists, men of education, and good fellows, they would be equally keen with the gun and the rifle did their time and circumstances admit of it. Such are not the men who insist on trespassing and spoiling the sport of others. They would no more think of doing so than they would of posting you an ounce of dynamite, cutting your cow's tail off, or—writing to the 'Scotsman.' It is your Bilious Birmingham Beauty, your Choice Chamberlain Constituent, — under whatever *nom de plume* he may choose to write, who does so. Cock of the walk at home, where he spends

eleven months in the year sanding his sugar and overworking his operatives, he finds himself nobody in the Highlands. Starting some fine morning on the "I'll go where I please" theory—selfishly indifferent whether he spoils the sport of better men than himself, ay, and harder-working ones too—he gets bundled "neck and crop" out of the forest, and vows vengeance. He'll "show up the whole infamous system," not having the remotest idea what the "system" is, or in what its "infamy" consists.

Gentlemen of this type, whose whole lives bear testimony to the fact that they live but for others, without one solitary thought of personal aggrandisement, would—were the North of Scotland handed over to them—soon cure all the ills that flesh is heir to, as they have done, or are doing. Here's the programme: Exterminate the deer and grouse; then stock plentifully with sheep—or rather, first of all, give every one a vote—that's the thing "to make you happy"; then stock with sheep—Leicesters for choice. How fat they would get in the Ross-shire corries! The rest is easy. As the population increases—which it is sure to do where mutton is cheap—establish board schools, and—there you are! What a bright future is before us! Instead of the "abomination of desolation" which now everywhere meets the eye, a country densely populated with a happy, prosperous, and contented people. Streams of omnibuses running to and fro, reminding one vividly of the traffic in the Clapham Road on the Derby Day. Rows of children, well fed and well clothed, sitting on the "knife-boards," thirsting for infor-

¹ He was found afterwards quite dead fully three miles from the place I shot him.

mation ; the flocks, panting from obesity, thickly dotting the hill-sides ; the gentle shepherd tending them and playing his pipe. What a picture ! Why, the Garden of Eden, in its palmy days, wouldn't be "in it." But I didn't mean to write of sheep. *Revenons à nos moutons.*

Whether or not the Highlands of Scotland would be benefited by turning the Southron out *en masse*, will be discovered when the experiment is tried. Meanwhile let me observe : In the forests with which I am acquainted, the landlords, non-resident of course, as in the beautiful island of Ireland, seldom, if ever, go near the place. The shooting tenants look after the old and infirm, the poor and the sick (I have known medical men brought from a great distance and at great expense in urgent cases), and subscribe to local charities. The great event of the year, looked forward to with the keenest delight, is the arrival of the family at the lodge ; their departure at

the end of the season is anticipated with grief and anxiety,—the termination of the lease with feelings of absolute dismay. Are deer-stalkers quite as black as they are painted ?

When the right honourable gentleman, having flogged the sole remaining tree in Hawarden Park, has distributed his last birthday chips to the admiring spectators, and the metropolitan police have discovered the perpetrators of the outrage at "The Fishery" ; when Mr Anderson has won the "Derby Handicap" at the Gun Club, and the deceased wife's sister is made an honest woman of ; when the "unfortunate nobleman languishing in prison," having finished the oakum, has "got his own again" ; when the lion lies down with the lamb, and the member for North Warwickshire sits down with the junior member for Northampton ; when "Scotus" learns manners, and the 'Scotsman' turns Conservative,—then, and not till then, may deer-stalking be disestablished !

PESSIMISM.

Is life worth living?—Well, to tell you true,
It scarcely is, if all men were like you.

BRIGHT-FACED maiden, bright-souled maiden,
What is this that I must hear?
Is thy heart with sorrow laden,
Is thine eye dimmed with a tear?
Can it be that lips so sweetly
Rounded to be kindly kissed,
Could be twisted indiscreetly
To that vile word *Pessimist*?
Not for thine own ills thou weepest;
Softly feathered is thy nest;
When thou wakest, when thou sleepest,
Thou art fortunèd with the best.
But thy sisters and thy brothers
Pierced with many a woful smart,
Dying children, wailing mothers,
Fret thy nerve, and stab thy heart.
In the country, in the city,
Godless deeds, a loveless list
Stir thy blood and move thy pity,
And thou art a PESSIMIST.
Storms and wars and tribulations,
Fevered passions' reainless tide,
With insane hallucinations
Mingled travel far and wide.
Can there be an Eye inspecting
Things so tumbling in pell-mell,
With a cool control directing
Such a hotbed, such a hell?
Nay, sweet maid, but think more slowly;
Though this thing and that be sad,
'Tis a logic most unholy
That the gross of things is bad;
'Tis a trick of melancholy,
Tainting life with death's alloy;
Or in wisdom, or in folly,
Nature still delights in joy.
Dost thou hear of starving sinners?
Nine and ten or ninety-nine,
Many thousands eat good dinners,
Many hundreds quaff good wine.
Hast thou seen a score of cripples?
Equal legs are not uncommon;
If you know one fool that tipples,
Thousands drink not—man and woman;
Tell me, if you know, how many
Murders happen in the town?

One a-year, perhaps, if any ;
Should that weigh your heart quite down ?
No doubt, if you read the papers,
You will find a strange hotch-potch,—
Doting dreams, delirious capers,
Many a blunder, blot, and blotch ;
Bags of windy speculation,
Babblement of small and great,
Cheating, swindling, speculation,
Squabblement of Church and State ;
Miners blown up, humbugs shown up,
Beaten wives, insulted brides,
Raving preachers, witless teachers,
Lunatics and suicides.
Drains and cesspools, faintings, fevers,
Poisoned cats and stolen colliers,
Simple women, gay deceivers,
Every sort and size of follies,
Wandering M.P.'s brainless babble,
Deputations, meetings, dinners,
Riots of the lawless rabble,
Purple sins of West-End sinners ;
Driving, dicing, drinking, dancing,
Spirit-rapping, ghostly stuff,
Bubble schemes, and deft financing,
When the shares are blown enough.
All this is true ; when men cut capers
That make the people talk or stare,
To-morrow, when you ope the papers,
You're sure to find your antics there.
But you and I and all our neighbours,
Meanwhile in pure and peaceful ways,
With link on link of fruitful labours,
Draw out our chain of happy days.
See things as they are ; be sober ;
Balance well life's loss and gain :
If to-day be chill October,
Summer suns will come again.
Are bleak winds for ever sighing ?
Do dark clouds for ever lower ?
Are your friends all dead and dying ?
All your sweetness turned to sour ?
Great men no doubt have sometimes small ways,
But a horse is not an ass,
And a black snake is not always
Lurking in the soft green grass.
Don't be hasty, gentle lady ;
In this whirl of diverse things
Keep your footing, and with steady
Poise control your equal wings.
All things can't to all be pleasant,
I love bitter, you love sweet ;

Some faint when a cat is present,
Rats find babies' cheeks a treat.
If all tiny things were tall things,
If all petty things were grand,
Where would greatness be, when all things
On one common level stand?
Do you think the wingèd breezes
Fraught with healthy ventilation,
When a tender infant sneezes
Should retreat with trepidation?
When dry Earth to Heaven is calling
For soft rain and freshening dew,
Shall the rain refrain from falling
Lest my lady wet her shoe?
Fools still rush to rash conclusions,
And the mole-eyed minion man
Talks of troubles and confusions,
When he sees not half the plan.
Spare to blame and fear to cavil,
With short leave dismiss your pain,
Let no fretful fancies revel
In the sanctum of your brain.
Use no magnifying glasses
To change molehills into mountains,
Nor on every ill that passes
Pour hot tears from bitter fountains.
Trust in God and know your duty,
Some good things are in your power;
Every day will bring its booty
From the labour of the hour.
Never reck what fools are prating,
Work and wait, let sorrow lie;
Live and love; have done with hating,
Goethe says—and so say I.

J. S. B.

THE BRIGAND'S BRIDE:

AN ADVENTURE IN SOUTHERN ITALY.

THE Italian peninsula during the years 1859-60-61, offered a particularly tempting field for adventure to ardent spirits in search of excitement; and, attracted partly by my sympathy with the popular movement, and partly by that simple desire, which gives so much zest to the life of youth, of risking it on all possible occasions, I had taken an active part, chiefly as an officious spectator, in all the principal events of those stirring years. It was in the spring of 1862 that I found matters beginning to settle down to a degree that threatened monotony; and with the termination of the winter gaieties at Naples and the close of the San Carlo, I seriously bethought me of accepting the offer of a naval friend, who was about to engage in blockade-running, and offered to land me in the Confederate States, when a recrudescence of activity on the part of the brigand bands in Calabria induced me to turn my attention in that direction. The first question I had to consider was, whether I should enjoy myself most by joining the brigands, or the troops which were engaged in suppressing them. As the former aspired to a political character, and called themselves patriotic bands fighting for their Church, their country, and their king—the refugee monarch of Naples—one could espouse their cause without exactly laying one's self open to the charge of being a bandit; but it was notorious in point of fact that the bands cared for neither the Pope nor the exiled King nor their annexed country, but committed the most abominable atrocities

in the names of all the three, for the simple purpose of filling their pockets. I foresaw not only extreme difficulty in being accepted as a member of the fraternity, more especially as I had hitherto been identified with the Garibaldians; but also the probability of finding myself compromised by acts from which my conscience would revolt, and for which my life would in all likelihood pay the forfeit. On the other hand, I could think of no friend among the officers of the Bersaglieri and cavalry regiments, then engaged in brigand-hunting in the Capitanata and Basilicata, to whom I could apply for an invitation to join them.

Under these circumstances, I determined to trust to the chapter of accidents; and armed with a knapsack, a sketch-book, and an air-gun, took my seat one morning in the Foggia diligence, with the vague idea of getting as near the scene of operations as possible, and seeing what would turn up. The air-gun was not so much a weapon of offence or defence as a means of introduction to the inhabitants. It had the innocent appearance of rather a thick walking-cane, with a little brass trigger projecting; and in the afternoon I would join the group sitting in front of the chemist's, which, for some reason or other, is generally a sort of open-air club in a small Neapolitan town, or stroll into the single modest *café* of which it might possibly boast, and toy abstractedly with the trigger. This, together with my personal appearance—for do what I would, I could never make myself look like a Neapolitan—would be

certain to attract attention, and some one bolder than the rest would make himself the spokesman, and politely ask me whether the cane in my hand was an umbrella or a fishing-rod ; on which I would amiably reply that it was a gun, and that I should have much pleasure in exhibiting my skill and the method of its operation to the assembled company. Then the whole party would follow me to an open space, and I would call for a pack of cards, and possibly—for I was a good shot in those days—pink the ace of hearts at fifteen paces. At any rate my performances usually called forth plaudits, and this involved a further interchange of compliments and explanations, and the production of my sketch-book, which soon procured me the acquaintance of some ladies and an invitation as an English artist to the house of some respectable citizen.

So it happened that, getting out of the diligence before it reached Foggia, I struck south, and wandered for some days from one little town to another, being always hospitably entertained, whether there happened to be an *albergo* or not, at private houses, seeing in this way more of the manners and customs of the inhabitants than would have been otherwise possible, gaining much information as to the haunts of the brigands, the whereabouts of the troops, and hearing much local gossip generally. The ignorance of the most respectable classes at this period was astounding ; it has doubtless all changed since. I have been at a town of 2000 inhabitants, not one of whom took in a newspaper : the whole population, therefore, was in as profound ignorance of what was transpiring in the rest of the world as if they had been in Nova Zemla. I have stayed with a mayor who did not know that England was an island ;

I have been the guest of a citizen who had never heard of Scotland, and to whom, therefore, my nationality was an enigma : but I never met any one—I mean of this same class—who had not heard of Palmerston. He was supposed by some to be an exporter of firearms on a very large scale, as many guns with the stamp “Palmer & Son” had found their way into Italy—and by all, to be the arbiter upon whose word hung the fate of the nation. He was a mysterious personage, execrated by the “blacks” and adored by the “reds.” And I shone with a reflected lustre as the citizen of a country of which he was the Prime Minister. As a consequence, we had political discussions, which were protracted far into the night, for the principal meal of the twenty-four hours was a 10 o'clock P.M. supper, at which, after the inevitable macaroni, were many unwholesome dishes, such as salads made of thistles, cows’ udders, and other delicacies, which deprived one of all desire for sleep. Notwithstanding which, we rose early, my hostess and the ladies of the establishment appearing in the early part of the day in the most extreme dishabille. Indeed, on one occasion when I was first introduced into the family of a respectable citizen, and shown into my bedroom, I mistook one of two females who were making the bed for the servant, and was surprised to see her hand a little *douceur* I gave her as an earnest of attention on her part to the other with a smile. She soon afterwards went to bed : we all did, from 11 A.M. till about 3 P.M., at which hour I was horrified to meet her arrayed in silks and satins, when she kindly took me a drive with her in a carriage and pair, and with a coachman in livery.

It was by this simple means, and by thus imposing myself upon the

hospitality of these unsophisticated people, that I worked my way by slow degrees, chiefly on foot, into the part of the country I desired to visit; and I trust that I in a measure repaid them for it by the stores of information which I imparted to them, and of which they stood much in need, and by little sketches of their homes and the surrounding scenery, with which I presented them. I was, indeed, dependent in some measure for hospitality of this description, as I had taken no money with me, partly because, to tell the truth, I had scarcely got any, and partly because I was afraid of being robbed by brigands of the little I had. I therefore eschewed the character of a *milordo Inglese*; but I never succeeded in dispelling all suspicion that I might not be a nephew of the Queen, or at least a very near relative of "Palmerston" in disguise. It was so natural, seeing what a deep interest both her Majesty and the Prime Minister took in Italy, that they should send some one *incognito* whom they could trust to tell them all about it.

Meantime, I was not surprised, when I came to know the disposition of the inhabitants, at the success of brigandage. It has never been my fortune before or since to live among such a timid population. One day at a large town a leading landed proprietor received notice that if he did not pay a certain sum in black-mail,—I forget at this distance of time the exact amount,—his farm or *masseria* would be robbed. This farm, which was in fact a handsome country-house, was distant about ten miles from the town. He therefore made an appeal to the citizens that they should arm themselves, and help him to defend his property, as he had determined not to pay, and had taken steps to be informed as to the exact date when

the attack was to be made in default of payment. More than 300 citizens enrolled themselves as willing to turn out in arms. On the day preceding the attack by the brigands, a rendezvous was given to these 300 on the great square for five in the morning, and thither I accordingly repaired, unable, however, to induce my host to accompany me, although he had signed as a volunteer. On reaching the rendezvous, I found the landed proprietor and a friend who was living with him, and about ten minutes afterwards two other volunteers strolled up. Five was all we could muster out of 300. It was manifestly useless to attempt anything with so small a force, and no arguments could induce any of the others to turn out; so the unhappy gentleman had the satisfaction of knowing that the brigands had punctually pilaged his place, carrying off all his live stock on the very day and at the very hour they said they would. As for the inhabitants venturing any distance from town, except under military escort, such a thing was unknown, and all communication with Naples was for some time virtually intercepted. I was regarded as a sort of monomaniac of recklessness, because I ventured on a solitary walk of a mile or two in search of a sketch,—an act of no great audacity on my part, for I had walked through various parts of the country without seeing a brigand, and found it difficult to realise that there was any actual danger in strolling a mile from a moderately large town.

Emboldened by impunity, I was tempted one day to follow up a most romantic glen in search of a sketch, when I came upon a remarkably handsome peasant girl, driving a donkey before her loaded with wood. My sudden appearance on the narrow path made the

animal shy against a projecting piece of rock, off which he rebounded to the edge of the path, which, giving way, precipitated him and his load down the ravine. He was brought up unhurt against a bush some twenty feet below, the fagots of wood being scattered in his descent in all directions. For a moment the girl's large fierce eyes flashed upon me with anger; but the impetuosity with which I went headlong after the donkey, with a view of repairing my error, and the absurd attempts I made to reverse the position of his feet, which were in the air, converted her indignation into a hearty fit of laughter, as, seeing that the animal was apparently uninjured, she scrambled down to my assistance. By our united efforts we at last succeeded in hoisting the donkey up to the path, and then I collected the wood and helped her to load it again—an operation which involved a frequent meeting of hands, and of the eyes, which had now lost the ferocity that had startled me at first, and seemed getting more soft and beaming every time I glanced at them, till at last, producing my sketch-book, I ventured to remark, "Ah, signorina, what a picture you would make! Now that the ass is loaded, let me draw you before we part, that I may carry away the recollection of the loveliest woman I have seen."

"First draw the donkey," she replied, "that I may carry away a recollection of the *galantuomo* who first upset him over the bank, and then helped me to load him."

Smiling at this ambiguous compliment, I gave her the sketch she desired, and was about to claim my reward, when she abruptly remarked—

"There is not time now; it is getting late, and I must not linger, as I have still an hour to go before reaching home. How is it that

you are not afraid to be wandering in this solitary glen by yourself? Do you not know the risks?"

"I have heard of them, but I do not believe in them," I said; "besides, I should be poor plunder for robbers."

"But you have friends, who would pay to ransom you, I suppose, if you were captured?"

"My life is not worth a hundred *scudi* to any of them," I replied, laughing; "but I am willing to forego the pleasure of drawing you now, *bellissima*, if you will tell me where you live, and let me come and paint you there at my leisure."

"You're a brave one," she said, with a little laugh; "there is not another man in all Ascoli who would dare to pay me a visit without an escort of twenty soldiers. But I am too grateful for your amiability to let you run such a risk. *Addio*, Signor Inglese. There are many reasons why I can't let you draw my picture, but I am not ungrateful, see!"—and she offered me her cheek, on which I instantly imprinted a chaste and fraternal salute.

"Don't think that you've seen the last of me, *carissima*," I called out, as she turned away. "I shall live on the memory of that kiss till I have an opportunity of repeating it."

And as I watched her retreating figure with an artist's eye, I was struck with its grace and suppleness, combined, as I had observed while she was helping me to load the donkey, with an unusual degree of muscular strength for a woman.

The spot at which this episode had taken place was so romantic, that I determined to make a sketch of it, and the shades of evening were closing in so fast that they warned me to hurry if I would reach the town before dark. I had just finished it, and was stooping to pick up my air-gun, when I

heard a sudden rush, and, before I had time to look up, I was thrown violently forward on my face, and found myself struggling in the embrace of a powerful grasp, from which I had nearly succeeded in freeing myself, when the arms which were clasping me were reinforced by several more pair, and I felt a rope being passed round my body.

"All right, signors!" I exclaimed; "I yield to superior numbers. You need not pull so hard; let me get up, and I promise to go with you quietly." And by this time I had turned sufficiently on my back to see that four men were engaged in tying me up.

"Tie his elbows together, and let him get up," said one; "he is not armed. Here, Giuseppe, carry his stick and paint-box, while I feel his pockets. *Corpo di Baccho!* twelve *bajocchi*," he exclaimed, producing those copper coins with an air of profound disgust. "It is to be hoped he is worth more to his friends. Now, young man, trudge, and remember that the first sign you make of attempting to run away, means four bullets through you."

As I did not anticipate any real danger, and as a prolonged detention was a matter of no consequence to a man without an occupation, I stepped forward with a light heart, rather pleased than otherwise with anticipations of the brigand's cave, and turning over in my mind whether or not I should propose to join the band.

We had walked an hour, and it had become dark, when we turned off the road, up a narrow path that led between rocky sides to a glade, at the extremity of which, under an overhanging ledge, was a small cottage, with what seemed to be a patch of garden in front.

"Ho! Anita!" called out the man who appeared to be the leader

of the band, "open! We have brought a friend to supper, who will require a night's lodgings."

An old woman with a light appeared, and over her shoulder, to my delight, I saw the face I had asked to be allowed to paint so shortly before. I was about to recognise her with an exclamation, when I saw a hurried motion of her finger to her lip, which looked a natural gesture to the casual observer, but which I construed into a sign of prudence.

"Where did you pick him up, Croppo?" she asked carelessly. "He ought to be worth something."

"Just twelve *bajocchi*," he answered with a sneering laugh. "Come, *amico mio*, you will have to give us the names of some of your friends."

"I am tolerably intimate with his Holiness the Pope, and I have a bowing acquaintance with the King of Naples, whom may God speedily restore to his own," I replied in a light and airy fashion, which seemed exceedingly to exasperate the man called Croppo.

"Oh yes, we know all about that; we never catch a man who does not profess to be a *Nero* of the deepest dye in order to conciliate our sympathies. It is just as well that you should understand, my friend, that all are fish who come into our net. The money of the Pope's friends is quite as good as the money of Garibaldi's. You need not hope to put us off with your Italian friends of any colour: what we want is English gold—good solid English gold, and plenty of it."

"Ah," said I, with a laugh, "if you did but know, my friend, how long I have wanted it too. If you could only suggest an Englishman who would pay you for my life, I would write to him immediately, and we would go halves in the ransom. Hold," I said, a bright

idea suddenly striking me, "suppose I were to write to my Government—how would that do?"

Croppo was evidently puzzled: my cheerful and unembarrassed manner apparently perplexed him. He had a suspicion that I was even capable of the audacity of making a fool of him, and yet that proposition about the Government rather staggered him. There might be something in it.

"Don't you think," he remarked grimly, "it would add to the effect of your communication if you were to enclose your own ears in your letter? I can easily supply them; and if you are not a little more guarded in your speech, you may possibly have to add your tongue."

"It would not have the slightest effect," I replied, paying no heed to this threat; "you don't know Palmerston as I do. If you wish to get anything out of him you must be excessively civil. What does he care about my ears?" And I laughed with such scornful contempt that Croppo this time felt that he had made a fool of himself; and I observed the lovely girl behind, while the corners of her mouth twitched with suppressed laughter, make a sign of caution.

"*Per Dio!*" he exclaimed, jumping up with fury, "understand, Signor Inglese, that Croppo is not to be trifled with. I have a summary way of treating disrespect," and he drew a long and exceedingly sharp-looking two-edged knife.

"So you would kill the goose"—and I certainly am a goose, I reflected—"that may lay a golden egg." But my allusion was lost upon him, and I saw my charmer touch her forehead significantly, as though to imply to Croppo that I was weak in the upper storey.

"An imbecile without friends and twelve *bajocchi* in his pocket," he muttered savagely. "Perhaps the night without food will restore

his senses. Come, fool!" and he roughly pushed me into a dark little chamber adjoining. "Here, Valeria, hold the light."

So Valeria was the name of the heroine of the donkey episode. As she held a small oil-lamp aloft, I perceived that the room in which I was to spend the night had more the appearance of a cellar than a chamber; it had been excavated on two sides from the bank, on the third there was a small hole, about six inches square, apparently communicating with another room, and on the fourth was the door by which I had entered, and which opened into the kitchen and general living room of the inhabitants. There was a heap of onions running to seed, the fagots of firewood which Valeria had brought that afternoon, and an old cask or two.

"Won't you give him some kind of a bed?" she asked Croppo.

"Bah! he can sleep on the onions," responded that worthy. "If he had been more civil and intelligent he should have had something to eat. You three," he went on, turning to the other men, "sleep in the kitchen, and watch that the prisoner does not escape. The door has a strong bolt besides. Come, Valeria."

And the pair disappeared, leaving me in a dense gloom, strongly pervaded by an odour of fungus and decaying onions. Groping into one of the casks, I found some straw, and spreading it on a piece of plank, I prepared to pass the night sitting with my back to the driest piece of wall I could find, which happened to be immediately under the air-hole, a fortunate circumstance, as the closeness was often stifling. I had probably been dozing for some time in a sitting position, when I felt something tickle the top of my head. The idea that it might be a large

spider caused me to start, when stretching up my hand, it came in contact with what seemed to be a rag, which I had not observed. Getting carefully up, I perceived a faint light gleaming through the aperture, and then saw that a hand was protruded through it, apparently waving the rag. As I felt instinctively that the hand was Valeria's, I seized the finger-tips, which was all I could get hold of, and pressed them to my lips. They were quickly drawn away, and then the whisper reached my ears—

"Are you hungry?"

"Yes."

"Then eat this," and she passed me a tin pannikin full of cold macaroni, which would just go through the opening.

"Dear Valeria," I said, with my mouth full, "how good and thoughtful you are!"

"Hush! he'll hear."

"Who?"

"Croppo."

"Where is he?"

"Asleep in the bed just behind me."

"How do you come to be in his bedroom?"

"Because I'm his wife."

"Oh!" A long pause during which I collapsed upon my straw seat, and swallowed macaroni thoughtfully. As the result of my meditations — "*Valeria carissima.*"

"Hush! Yes."

"Can't you get me out of this infernal den?"

"Perhaps, if they all three sleep in the kitchen; at present one is awake. Watch for my signal, and if they all three sleep, I will manage to slip the bolt. Then you must give me time to get back into bed, and when you hear me snore you may make the attempt. They are all three sleeping on the floor, so be very careful where you tread; I will also leave the front door

a little open, so that you can slip through without noise."

"Dearest Valeria!"

"Hush! Yes."

"Hand me that cane—it is my fishing-rod, you know — through this hole; you can leave the sketch-book and paint-box under the tree that the donkey fell against,—I will call for them some day soon. And, Valeria, don't you think we could make our lips meet through this beastly hole?"

"Impossible. There's my hand; heavens! Croppo would murder me if he knew. Now keep quiet till I give the signal. Oh, do let go my hand!"

"Remember, Valeria, *bellissima, carissima*, whatever happens, that I love you."

But I don't think she heard this, and I went and sat on the onions because I could see the hole better, and the smell of them kept me awake.

It was at least two hours after this that the faint light appeared at the hole in the wall, and a hand was pushed through. I rushed at the finger-tips.

"Here's your fishing-rod," she said when I had released them, and she had passed me my air-gun. "Now be very careful how you tread. There is one asleep across the door, but you can open it about two feet. Then step over him; then make for a gleam of moonlight that comes through the crack of the front door, open it very gently and slip out. *Addio, caro Inglese*; mind you wait till you hear me snoring."

Then she lingered, and I heard a sigh.

"What is it, sweet Valeria?" and I covered her hand with kisses.

"I wish Croppo had blue eyes like you."

This was murmured so softly that I may have been mistaken, but I'm nearly sure that was what she

said; then she drew softly away, and two minutes afterwards I heard her snoring. As the first sound issued from her lovely nostrils, I stealthily approached the door, gently pushed it open; stealthily stepped over a space which I trusted cleared the recumbent figure that I could not see; cleared him; stole gently on for the streak of moonlight; trod squarely on something that seemed like an outstretched hand, for it gave under my pressure and produced a yell; felt that I must now rush for my life; dashed the door open, and down the path with four yelling ruffians at my heels. I was a pretty good runner, but the moon was behind a cloud, and the way was rocky,—moreover, there must have been a short cut I did not know, for one of my pursuers gained upon me with unaccountable rapidity—he appeared suddenly within ten yards of my heels. The others were at least a hundred yards behind. I had nothing for it but to turn round, let him almost run against the muzzle of my air-gun, pull the trigger, and see him fall in his tracks. It was the work of a second, but it checked my pursuers. They had heard no noise, but they found something that they did not bargain for, and lingered a moment, then they took up the chase with redoubled fury. But I had too good a start; and where the path joined the main road, instead of turning down towards the town, as they expected I would, I dodged round in the opposite direction, the uncertain light this time favouring me, and I heard their footsteps and their curses dying away on the wrong track. Nevertheless I ran on at full speed, and it was not till the day was dawning that I began to feel safe and relax my efforts. The sun had been up an hour when I reached a small town, and the

little *locanda* was just opening for the day when I entered it, thankful for a hot cup of coffee, and a dirty little room, with a dirtier bed, where I could sleep off the fatigue and excitement of the night. I was strolling down almost the only street in the afternoon when I met a couple of carabineers riding into it, and shortly after encountered the whole troop, to my great delight, in command of an intimate friend whom I had left a month before in Naples.

"Ah, *caro mio*!" he exclaimed, when he saw me, "well met. What on earth are you doing here?—looking for those brigands you were so anxious to find when you left Naples? Considering that you are in the heart of their country, you should not have much difficulty in gratifying your curiosity."

"I have had an adventure or two," I replied, carelessly. "Indeed that is partly the reason you find me here. I was just thinking how I could get safely back to Ascoli, when your welcome escort appeared; for I suppose you are going there, and will let me take advantage of it."

"Only too delighted; and you can tell me your adventures. Let us dine together to-night, and I will find you a horse to ride on with us in the morning."

I am afraid my account of the episode with which I have acquainted the reader was not strictly accurate in all its details, as I did not wish to bring down my military friends on poor Valeria, so I skipped all allusion to her and my detention in her home; merely saying that I had had a scuffle with brigands, and had been fortunate enough to escape under cover of the night. As we passed it next morning I recognised the path which led up to Valeria's cottage, and shortly after observed that young woman herself coming up the glen.

"Holloa," I said, with great presence of mind as she drew near, "my lovely model, I declare. Just you ride on, old fellow, while I stop and ask her when she can come and sit to me again."

"You artists are sad rogues,—what chances your profession must give you!" remarked my companion, as he cast an admiring glance on Valeria, and rode discreetly on.

"There is nothing to be afraid of, lovely Valeria," I said in a low tone, as I lingered behind! "be sure I will never betray either you or your rascally—hem! I mean your excellent Croppo. By the way, was that man much hurt that I was obliged to trip up?"

"Hurt! Santa Maria, he is dead, with a bullet through his heart. Croppo says it must have been magic; for he had searched you, and he knew you were not armed, and he was within a hundred yards of you when poor Pippo fell, and he heard no sound."

"Croppo is not far wrong," I said, glad of the opportunity thus offered of imposing on the ignorance and credulity of the natives. "He seemed surprised that he could not frighten me the other night. Tell him he was much more in my power than I was in his, dear Valeria," I added, looking tenderly into her eyes. "I didn't want to alarm you, that was the reason I let him off so easily; but I may not be so merciful next time. Now, sweetest, that kiss you owe me, and which the wall prevented your giving me the other night." She held up her face with the innocence of a child, as I stooped from my saddle.

"I shall never see you again, Signor Inglese," she said, with a sigh; "for Croppo says it is not safe, after what happened the night before last, to stay another hour. Indeed he went off yesterday, leaving me orders to follow to-day; but I went first to put your sketch-

book under the bush, where the donkey fell, and where you will find it."

It took us another minute or two to part after this; and when I had ridden away I turned to look back, and there was Valeria gazing after me. "Positively," I reflected, "I am over head and ears in love with the girl, and I believe she is with me. I ought to have nipped my feelings in the bud when she told me she was his wife; but then he is a brigand, who threatened both my ears and my tongue, to say nothing of my life. To what extent is the domestic happiness of such a ruffian to be respected?" and I went on splitting the moral straws suggested by this train of thought, until I had recovered my sketch-book and overtaken my escort, with whom I rode triumphantly back into Ascoli, where my absence had been the cause of much anxiety, and my fate was even then being eagerly discussed. My friends with whom I usually sat round the chemist's door, were much exercised by the reserve which I manifested in reply to the fire of cross-examination to which I was subjected for the next few days; and English eccentricity, which was proverbial even in this secluded town, received a fresh illustration in the light and airy manner with which I treated a capture and escape from brigands, which I regarded with such indifference that I could not be induced even to condescend to details. "It was a mere scuffle; there were only four; and, being an Englishman, I polished them all off with the 'box,'"—and I closed my fist, and struck a scientific attitude of self-defence, branching off into a learned disquisition on the pugilistic art, which filled my hearers with respect and amazement. From this time forward the sentiment with which I regarded my air-gun under-

went a change. When a friend had made me a present of it a year before, I regarded it in the light of a toy, and rather resented the gift as too juvenile. I wonder he did not give me a kite or a hoop, I mentally reflected. Then I had found it useful among Italians, who are a trifling people, and like playthings; but now that it had saved my life, and sent a bullet through a man's heart, I no longer entertained the same feeling of contempt for it. Not again would I make light of it,—so potent an engine of destruction which had procured me the character of being a magician. I would hide it from human gaze, and cherish it as a sort of fetish. So I bought a walking-stick and an umbrella, and strapped it up with them, wrapped in my plaid; and when, shortly after, by a fortunate fluke at billiards, at which I was a proficient, I had won enough from the officers of my friend's regiment, which soon after arrived, to buy a horse from one of them, I accepted their invitation to accompany them on their brigand-hunting expeditions, not one of them knew that I had such a weapon as an air-gun in my possession.

Our *modus operandi* on these occasions was as follows: On receiving information from some proprietor that the brigands were threatening his property,—it was impossible to get intelligence from the peasantry, for they were all in league with the brigands; indeed they all took a holiday from regular work, and joined a band for a few weeks from time to time,—we proceeded, with a force sufficiently strong to cope with the supposed strength of the band, to the farm in question. The bands were all mounted, and averaged from 200 to 400 men each. It was calculated that upwards of 2000 men were thus engaged in

harrying the country, and this enabled the *Neri* to talk of the king's forces engaged in legitimate warfare against those of Victor Emmanuel. Riding over the vast plains of the Capitanata, we would discern against the sky-outline the figure of a solitary horseman. This we knew to be a picket. Then there was no time to be lost, and away we would go for him helter-skelter across the plain; he would instantly gallop in on the main body, probably occupying a *masseria*. If they thought they were strong enough, they would show fight. If not, they would take to their heels in the direction of the mountains, with us in full cry after them. If they were hardly pressed they would scatter, and we were obliged to do the same, and the result would be that the swiftest horsemen might possibly effect a few captures. It was an exciting species of warfare, partaking a good deal more of the character of a hunting-field than of cavalry skirmishing. Sometimes, where the ground was hilly, we had Bersaglieri with us; and as the brigands took to the mountains, the warfare assumed a different character. Sometimes, in default of these active little troops, we took local volunteers, whom we found a very poor substitute. On more than one occasion when we came upon the brigands in a farm, they thought themselves sufficiently strong to hold it against us, and on one of these the cowardice of the volunteers was amusingly illustrated. The band was estimated at about 200, and we had 100 volunteers and a detachment of 50 cavalry. On coming under the fire of the brigands, the cavalry captain, who was in command, ordered the volunteers to charge, intending when they had dislodged the enemy to ride him down on the open; but the volunteer officer did not repeat

the word, and stood stock-still, his men all imitating his example.

"Charge! I say," shouted the cavalry captain; "why don't you charge? I believe you're afraid!"

"*E vero*," said the captain of volunteers, shrugging his shoulders.

"Here, take my horse—you're only fit to be a groom; and you, men, dismount and let these cowards hold your horses, while you follow me,"—and jumping from his horse, the gallant fellow, followed by his men, charged the building, from which a hot fire was playing upon them, sword in hand. In less than a quarter of an hour the brigands were scampering, some on foot and some on horseback, out of the farm-buildings, followed by a few stray and harmless shots from such of the volunteers as had their hands free. We lost three men killed and five wounded in this little skirmish, and killed six of the brigands, besides making a dozen prisoners. When I say we, I mean my companions; for having no weapon, I had discreetly remained with the volunteers. The scene of this gallant exploit was on the classic battle-field of Cannæ. This captain, who was not the friend I had joined the day after my brigand adventure, was a most plucky and dashing cavalry officer, and was well seconded by his men, who were all Piedmontese, and of very different temperament from the Neapolitans. On one occasion a band of 250 brigands waited for us on the top of a small hill, never dreaming that we should charge up it with the odds five to one against us—but we did; and after firing a volley at us, which emptied a couple of saddles, they broke and fled when we were about twenty yards from them. Then began one of the most exciting scurries across country it was ever my fortune to be engaged in. The brigands scattered—so did we; and I found my-

self with two troopers in chase of a pair of bandits, one of whom seemed to be the chief of the band. A small stream wound through the plain, which we dashed across. Just beyond was a tributary ditch, which would have been considered a fair jump in the hunting-field: both brigands took it in splendid style. The hindmost was not ten yards ahead of the leading trooper, who came a cropper, on which the brigand reined up, fired a pistol-shot into the prostrate horse and man, and was off; but the delay cost him dear. The other trooper, who was a little ahead of me, got safely over. I followed suit. In another moment he had fired his carbine into the brigand's horse, and down they both came by the run. We instantly reined up, for I saw there was no chance of overtaking the remaining brigand, and the trooper was in the act of cutting down the man as he struggled to his feet, when to my horror I recognised the lovely features of—Valeria.

"Stay, man!" I shouted, throwing myself from my horse, "it's a woman! touch her if you dare!" and then seeing the man's eye gleam with indignation, I added, "brave soldiers, such as you have proved yourself to be, do not kill women; though your traducers say you do, do not give them cause to speak truth. I will be responsible for this woman's safety. Here, to make it sure, you had better strap us together." I piqued myself exceedingly on this happy inspiration, whereby I secured an arm-and-arm walk, of a peculiar kind it is true, with Valeria, and indeed my readiness to sacrifice myself seemed rather to astonish the soldier, who hesitated. However, his comrade, whose horse had been shot in the ditch, now came up, and seconded my proposal, as I offered him a mount on mine.

"How on earth am I to let you escape, dear Valeria?" I whispered, giving her a sort of affectionate nudge: the position of our arms prevented my squeezing hers, as I could have wished, and the two troopers kept behind us, watching us, I thought, suspiciously.

"It is quite impossible now—don't attempt it," she answered; "perhaps there may be an opportunity later."

"Was that Croppo who got away?" I asked.

"Yes. He could not get his cowardly men to stand on that hill."

"What a bother those men are behind, dearest! Let me pretend to scratch my nose with this hand that is tied to yours, which I can thus bring to my lips."

I accomplished this manœuvre rather neatly, but parties now came straggling in from other directions, and I was obliged to give up whispering and become circum-spect. They all seemed rather astonished at our group, and the captain laughed heartily as he rode up and called out, "Who have you got tied to you there, *caro mio*?"

"Croppo's wife. I had her tied to me for fear she should escape; besides, she is not bad-looking."

"What a prize!" he exclaimed. "We have made a tolerable haul this time,—twenty prisoners in all—among them the priest of the band. Our colonel has just arrived, so I am in luck—he will be delighted. See, the prisoners are being brought up to him now: but you had better remount and present yours in a less singular fashion."

When we reached the colonel we found him examining the priest. His breviary contained various interesting notes, written on some of the fly-leaves.

For instance:—

"Administered extreme unction to A——, shot by Croppo's orders: my share ten *scudi*.

"Ditto, ditto, to R——, hung by Croppo's order: my share two *scudi*."

"Ditto, ditto, to S——, roasted by Croppo's order, to make him name an agent to bring his ransom: overdone by mistake, and died—so got nothing."

"Ditto, ditto, to P——, executed by the knife by Croppo's order, for disobedience."

"M——, and F——, and D——, three new members, joined to-day: confessed them, and received the usual fees."

He was a dark, beetle-browed-looking ruffian, this holy man; and the colonel, when he had finished examining his book of prayer and crime, tossed it to me, saying,—
"There! that will show your friends in England the kind of politicians we make war against. Ha! what have we here? This is more serious." And he unfolded a piece of paper which had been concealed in the breast of the priest. "This contains a little valuable information," he added, with a grim smile. "Nobody like priests and women for carrying about political secrets, so you may have made a valuable capture," and he turned to where I stood with Valeria; "let her be carefully searched."

Now the colonel was a very pompous man, and the document he had just discovered on the priest added to his sense of self-importance. When, therefore, a large, carefully folded paper was produced from the neighbourhood of Valeria's lovely bosom, his eyes sparkled with anticipation. "Ho, ho!" he exclaimed, as he clutched it eagerly, "the plot is thickening!" and he spread out triumphantly, before he had himself seen what it was, the exquisitely drawn portrait of a donkey. There was a suppressed titter, which exploded into a shout when the bystanders looked into the colonel's indignant face. I

only was affected differently, as my gaze fell upon this touching evidence of dear Valeria's love for me, and I glanced at her tenderly. "This has a deeper significance than you think for," said the colonel, looking round angrily. "Croppo's wife does not carefully secrete a drawing like that on her person for nothing. See, it is done by no common artist. It means something, and must be preserved."

"It may have a Biblical reference to the state of Italy. You remember Issachar was likened to an ass between two burdens. In that case it probably emanated from Rome," I remarked; but nobody seemed to see the point of the allusion, and the observation fell flat.

That night I dined with the colonel, and after dinner I persuaded him to let me visit Valeria in prison, as I wished to take the portrait of the wife of the celebrated brigand chief. I thanked my stars that my friend who had seen her, when we met in the glen, was away on duty with his detachment, and could not testify to our former acquaintance.

My meeting with Valeria on this occasion was too touching and full of tender passages to be of any general interest. Valeria told me that she was still a bride; that she had only been married a few months, and that she had been compelled to become Croppo's wife against her choice, as the brigand's will was too powerful to be resisted; but that, though he was jealous and attached to her, he was stern and cruel, and so far from winning her love since her marriage, he had rather estranged it by his fits of passion and ferocity. As may be imagined, the portrait, which was really very successful, took some time in execution, the more especially as we had to discuss the possibilities of Valeria's escape.

"We are going to be transferred to-morrow to the prison at Foggia," she said. "If, while we were passing through the market-place, a disturbance of some sort could be created, as it is market-day, and all the country people know me, and are my friends, a rescue might be attempted. I know how to arrange for that, only they must see some chance of success."

A bright thought suddenly struck me; it was suggested by a trick I had played shortly after my arrival in Italy.

"You know I am something of a magician, Valeria; you have had proof of that. If I create a disturbance by magic to-morrow, when you are passing through the market-place, you won't stay to wonder what is the cause of the confusion, but instantly take advantage of it to escape."

"Trust me for that, *caro mio*."

"And if you escape, when shall we meet again?"

"I am known too well now to risk another meeting. I shall be in hiding with Croppo, where it will be impossible for you to find me, nor while he lives could I ever dare to think of leaving him; but I shall never forget you"—and she pressed my hands to her lips—"though I shall no longer have the picture of the donkey to remember you by."

"See, here's my photograph; that will be better," said I, feeling a little annoyed—foolishly, I admit. Then we strained each other to our respective hearts, and parted. Now it so happened that my room in the *locanda* in which I was lodging overlooked the market-place. Here at ten o'clock in the morning I posted myself—for that was the hour, as I had been careful to ascertain, when the prisoners were to start for Foggia. I opened the window about three inches, and

fixed it there: I took out my gun, put eight balls in it, and looked down upon the square. It was crowded with the country people in their bright-coloured costumes, chaffering over their produce. I looked above them to the tall campanile of the church which filled one side of the square. I receded a step and adjusted my gun on the ledge of the window to my entire satisfaction. I then looked down the street in which the prison was situated, and which debouched on the square, and awaited events. At ten minutes past ten I saw the soldiers at the door of the prison form up, and then I knew that the twenty prisoners of whom they formed the escort were starting; but the moment they began to move, I fired at the big bell in the campanile, which responded with a loud clang. All the people in the square looked up. As the prisoners entered the square, which they had to cross in its whole breadth, I fired again and again. The bell banged twice, and the people began to buzz about. Now, I thought, I must let the old bell have it. By the time five more balls had struck the bell with a resounding din, the whole square was in commotion. A miracle was evidently in progress, or the campanile was bewitched. People began to run hither and thither; all the soldiers forming the escort gaped open-mouthed at the steeple as the clangour continued. As soon as the last shot had been fired, I looked down into the square and saw all this, and I saw that the prisoners were attempting to escape, and in more than one instance had succeeded, for the soldiers began to scatter in pursuit, and the country people to form themselves into impeding crowds, as though by accident, but nowhere could I see Valeria. When I was quite sure she had escaped,

I went down and joined the crowd. I saw three prisoners captured and brought back; and when I asked the officer in command how many had escaped, he said three—Croppo's wife, the priest, and another.

When I met my cavalry friends at dinner that evening, it was amusing to hear them speculate upon the remarkable occurrence which had, in fact, upset the wits of the whole town. Priests and vergers and sacristans had visited the campanile, and one of them had brought away a flattened piece of lead, which looked as if it might have been a bullet; but the suggestion that eight bullets could have hit the bell in succession without anybody hearing a sound, was treated with ridicule. I believe the bell was subsequently exorcised with holy water. I was afraid to remain with the regiment with my air-gun after this, lest some one should discover it, and unravel the mystery; besides, I felt a sort of traitor to the brave friends who had so generously offered me their hospitality, so I invented urgent private affairs, which demanded my immediate return to Naples, and on the morning of my departure found myself embraced by all the officers of the regiment, from the colonel downwards, who, in the fervour of their kisses, thrust sixteen waxed moustache-points against my cheeks.

About eighteen months after this, I heard of the capture and execution of Croppo, and I knew that Valeria was free; but I had unexpectedly inherited a property, and was engaged to be married. I am now a country gentleman with a large family. My sanctum is stocked with various mementoes of my youthful adventures, but none awakens in me such thrilling memories as are excited by the breviary of the brigand priest and the portrait of the brigand's bride.

SIR THEODORE MARTIN'S LIFE OF LORD LYNDBURST.

It is now some fifteen years since a posthumous volume of Lord Campbell's 'Lives of the Chancellors,' containing those of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham, was given to the public; and seldom, in all probability, was a book received with more general condemnation. In the case of Lord Lyndhurst especially, it was felt that the narrative of his life, besides teeming with inaccuracies, was brimming over with ill-nature, and that the studied purpose of the writer had been to present his brilliant contemporary in as unfavourable a light as possible. It was pretty evident also that Lord Campbell felt that he could indulge his malevolent humour with impunity, from the answer Lord Lyndhurst had given him when asked by him to supply him with materials for his life. "Materials you shall have *none* from me: I have already burnt every letter and paper which could be useful to my biographer; therefore he is at liberty to follow his own inclination." Lord Campbell did follow his own inclination accordingly, and fulfilled to the letter the prophecy made by Lord Lyndhurst to Brougham years before, as quoted in the Memoirs of the latter.

"Depend upon it," said he, "Campbell will never forgive you. . . . I predict that he will take his revenge by describing you with all the gall of his nature. He will write of you, *and perhaps me too*, with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; for such is his nature."

Lord Lyndhurst, apparently,

knew his man well. For what are the leading features of his life and character as portrayed by Lord Campbell? First and foremost, he is depicted as a politician who, having from his youth upwards been "a Liberal and something more," having owed his early success at the Bar to his open and avowed sympathy with Radical doctrines, deliberately "ratted" to the side of the Tories for the sake of a seat in Parliament, and the certainty of political and legal advancement. As a barrister, we are told of him that he was a man habitually indolent and ease-loving—indifferent, as a rule, to the interests of his clients, and more solicitous about the effect he might produce when speaking than the ultimate result of the trial. We are told, further, that he was perfectly unscrupulous in his statement of facts, often coming into Court thoroughly unprepared, and trusting to the chapter of accidents and his natural quickness to enable him to pull through without a *fiasco*. As Lord Chancellor and Cabinet Minister, we are repeatedly told that he was disliked and mistrusted by those under whom he served, who rarely, if ever, asked his advice on any question of moment, and against whom he was perpetually intriguing for the leadership of his party. As a son and brother, we are left to draw the inference that he was cold-hearted and indifferent to family ties; and as a young man, neglectful of his family circle, bent only on present enjoyment, and perfectly reckless as to what

might be thought or said of him. As he rose to eminence at the Bar and in Parliament, it is plainly insinuated that he became unreasonably ashamed of his family origin, and when made a peer, did his best to conceal the fact that his father was an artist. We are further taught to believe that he was ostentatious and extravagant, turning his back upon the legal friends and associates of his earlier life, and opening his doors only to the rank and fashion of London society. We are further to believe, that though his engaging manners and brilliant conversational powers attracted around him a large circle of friends, yet none were free from the lash of his sarcasm; and that "there was a laughing devil in his sneer," as in turn he held up to ridicule each parting guest for the benefit of those who outstayed him.

Such are the most prominent features of the portrait that Lord Campbell has drawn of one of whom it may fairly be said, that there was no more conspicuous figure in one of the most eventful and exciting periods of our domestic history in the present century. Few indeed could have been credulous enough to believe in it at the time it was exhibited; and no doubt it is a fair matter for opinion whether Lord Lyndhurst's fame did not stand upon too high a pinnacle to render any subsequent vindication of his life and character necessary. It must, however, be remembered that, when Lord Campbell's volume first appeared, the memory of Lord Lyndhurst was yet fresh in the recollections of many who had known him intimately, and could therefore laugh to scorn the attempt of the author to palm off upon them as a true biography so vile a caricature of the great original whom they had both loved and revered. But fifteen years have passed since

then; most of those who were his friends have disappeared from the scene; and the time is at hand when the biographical memoirs must remain the sole source from which present and future generations can derive their impressions of what manner of man he was, and what part he played in the history of his country. Can it, then, be a matter of surprise to any one, that to one whom Lord Lyndhurst left behind him to mourn his loss, the thought should gradually become intolerable that Lord Campbell's volume should go down to posterity as the sole biography of one whose memory was inexpressibly dear to her, and that no attempt should be made to present the British public with the genuine picture? This, as we understand it, is the one great motive that has prompted the publication of Sir Theodore Martin's interesting volume; and we do not hesitate to say that, in our opinion, he has very ably and successfully accomplished the difficult and delicate task intrusted to him. He has had serious difficulties to encounter. He has been disappointed in more sources than one from which he might have hoped to get important information—notably, the papers of Lord Beaconsfield; and he has had from first to last to contend with the fact, that the subject of his biography had done his best to prevent his life being written, by destroying all documents that he thought might be of use to a biographer. But it is impossible for a man of Lord Lyndhurst's position so entirely to efface himself. He may destroy letters written to himself, but he cannot destroy those he has written to others; and enough of his correspondence has been preserved to throw valuable light upon his character and the earlier portion

of his career. From the very nature of the case, there is no doubt a deficiency of those details of the domestic circle, and correspondence and conversation with intimate friends on the politics and gossip of the day, which have lent such a charm ere now to the biographies of great men, but with which, let us add at the same time, it is quite possible for a biographical memoir to be sadly overdone. The wonder in this case is, that Sir Theodore has been able to manufacture such a satisfactory tale of bricks with the limited amount of clay and straw that he was able to obtain.

Since his volume was first published, its contents have given rise, as might have been expected, to much discussion and difference of opinion as to its merits; but we have noticed an almost universal agreement that he has succeeded in the sole object for which his task was undertaken. He has cleared Lord Lyndhurst's fame from the calumnies which had been heaped on it by Lord Campbell. No doubt, as has been suggested, and as Sir Theodore himself frankly admits, his volume would have been smoother and pleasanter reading could he have written a plain straightforward narrative without such frequent mention of Lord Campbell's misstatements. But it must be remembered, at the same time, that to deal with and to refute these misstatements is avowedly the first motive of the book. To write a book for a special purpose, without letting that purpose appear in its pages, is to enact the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out; and in this censorious world critics without number would have doubtless urged that the misstatements were ignored because the new biographer was afraid or

unwilling to grapple with them. On the other hand, had the misstatements and refutations, as others have suggested, been huddled side by side into an appendix at the end of the volume, like the expurgated passages of some Bowdlerised classic, they would have run a very fair chance of being passed over altogether. The method that Sir Theodore has chosen, has at all events this advantage, that the true and false versions appear in his narrative in their proper places—that is to say, in immediate connection with the circumstances to which they refer, and cannot therefore well remain unread. It has been gravely remarked, much to our surprise, that the world at large will know no more after reading Sir Theodore's volume, what manner of man Lord Lyndhurst was, than it did before. But if it learns nothing else, the world at large will at least learn this, that he was pretty nearly in every respect the reverse of the portrait drawn of him by Lord Campbell. The contrast between the two portraits is so remarkable, that at times, as we read, we are inclined to doubt whether the two volumes can possibly be biographies of one and the same person. Instead of a turncoat, changing his principles as easily as his garments for the sake of the position and emoluments of office, we have a statesman faithful throughout his long and brilliant career to the creed of his early life. Instead of a Minister mistrusted and disliked by his leaders, we have one of whom those leaders both spoke and wrote in terms of the highest regard as a colleague in whom they reposed implicit confidence, and whose counsel they gladly sought in all emergencies. As a barrister, we have a man whose marvellous memory and quickness of intellectual grasp enabled

him to learn more of the details of a complicated case in an hour than ordinary men would in days, and who therefore gave the outward appearance of one who took his work with easy indifference, but who nevertheless spared himself no labour of previous preparation, and left no stone unturned to do justice to his clients. We have the portrait further presented to us of a man who was a loving and dutiful son to his parents, and an affectionate brother to his sisters—who, when his father died in embarrassed circumstances, redoubled his labours at the Bar in order that he might honourably discharge his liabilities, and who at all times found his happiest moments of life in the ease and relaxation of his domestic circle. We have a man who, so far from being ashamed of his family, and seeking to conceal the fact that he was an artist's son, was eminently proud of that artist's fame, and when he became a peer bought up his father's finest pictures and hung them conspicuously on the walls of his own house. We have, finally, a man who never threw off an old friend or ignored a vulgar or unfashionable acquaintance, and who, during his long life, so much of which was passed in the fierce noontide glare and turmoil of party warfare, lost fewer friends, and won for himself the love and esteem of a larger circle of distinguished men of all parties, than any other man of his time.

We wish heartily that we could accept the excuse that has been so freely offered for Lord Campbell, that he was a habitually hasty and inaccurate writer, and that all his misstatements are the result of sheer carelessness, and nothing more. Not long ago, it was urged in one contemporary, he was convicted by one who had made "Bacon and all his works" his special study,

of a tissue of inaccuracies with respect to the life of the great chancellor of James I.; and as with one, so with all. But though Lord Campbell may have had no motive for disparaging the "dark-browed Verulam," the same cannot be said of him with respect to either Lord Lyndhurst or Brougham, if we are to credit the passage from Brougham's Memoirs which we have already quoted. That inaccuracies are abundant throughout the pages of his last volume, too, is patent enough; and for his inveterate habit of

"Men, manners, times, seasons, and facts all

Misquoting, misstating,
Misplacing, misdating,"

he may take brevet rank with Sir Nathaniel Wraxall himself. But whilst he appears to have acted rigidly enough on the principle, "Nothing extenuate," it is impossible, after reading Sir Theodore Martin's *exposé* of his misstatements, to believe that he conformed to the rest of Othello's entreaty, "nor set down aught in malice." Inaccuracy might possibly account, were the instance an isolated one, for the attributing to one speaker a joke made by another—such as that respecting "tailors and turncoats," quoted at page 258, where Lord Campbell is proved to have substituted Lord Lyndhurst for Lord King, to whom Lord Eldon really made the happy repartee. But inaccuracy alone will not account for the wholesale garbling of passages which Lord Campbell himself professes to have taken from Hansard, by the deliberate insertion of paragraphs which in every instance are necessary to prove the case that he wishes to establish against the subject of his biographical memoir. Take, for instance, this passage, which Sir

Theodore quotes on the very next page, and in which Lord Campbell professes to give Lord Eldon's speech *verbatim* from Hansard :—

"On a subsequent day," writes Lord Campbell, "the Chancellor charged Lord Eldon with insidiously insinuating, when presenting petitions against the Roman Catholics, that they were not loyal subjects, and that they were unwilling to swear that they would support the Protestant succession to the Crown.

"Lord Eldon: '*My Lords, I am not in the habit of insinuating. What I think I avow. And, my Lords, I am an open, not an insidious enemy, when I feel it my duty to oppose any measure, or any man. My character, known to my country for more than fifty years, is, I feel, more than sufficient to repel so unfounded an insinuation. It is equally unnecessary that I should criticise the career of my accuser.*'"

Here the object plainly is to picture Lord Eldon as following up his first charge against his successor of being a turncoat; and accordingly, the words in italics, not a trace of which is to be found in Hansard, are deliberately put into his mouth. Or take, again, the following extract from Copley's first speech in Parliament (150), for which Hansard is again given by Lord Campbell as his authority :—

"I have expressed," said he, *in a calm, lowered tone*, "and I will repeat the opinions *which I have deliberately formed, and which I conscientiously entertain on this question*. I am aware that these opinions are distasteful to some honourable members on the other side of the House, *who perhaps think our institutions might be improved by a little Jacobinical admixture.*" (Loud cheers and counter-cheers.)

Here, again, the object was to prove that Copley's language drew down upon him "a tempest of ironical cheers" from those who had a knowledge of his Radical

antecedents; and, as in the former instance, the words in italics are deliberately added. It has been urged for Lord Campbell that he "had other sources of information besides Hansard." If so, why profess to quote Hansard as the authority for words not to be found there? But it is pretty evident that his only source of information in these and similar instances was his own inventive faculty.

We confess that we do not think it a question of such vital consequence as has been represented, whether Lord Campbell was or was not looked upon by Lord Lyndhurst as an intimate friend, and was or was not a frequent visitor at his house. In either case, as it appears to us, Lord Campbell cannot help being impaled on the horns of a serious dilemma. If he was not on the friendly terms that he himself would give us to understand, then he must have drawn upon his imagination for much of which he represents himself to have been a hearer and an eyewitness. If he was, then, even supposing that every word of his scandalous *Life of Lord Lyndhurst* was gospel truth, he was the very last man who should have written it. Surely, as his pen travelled over the paper, he must now and then have been stung to remorse with the recollection of the text: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." The ingratitude is all the blacker, as we learn from Sir Theodore Martin that on two important occasions in his own life he was indebted for advancement to the man whom he so defamed. He was indebted to him for his silk gown, for which he himself applied; and it was owing to the good word of Lord Lyndhurst that he ever became Lord Chancellor. When Lord Palmerston

became Premier for the second time in 1859, he was in a difficulty as to deciding between two rival claimants for the Woolsack, and, through a member of his Cabinet, he applied to Lord Lyndhurst for advice. Lord Lyndhurst recommended that the office should be given to Campbell, and his advice was followed. "I owe this all to you," said the new Chancellor to Lord Lyndhurst one day in the House of Lords, in the hearing of several peers. But οὐ πάσχοντες ἐν ἀλλὰ δρῶντες κτώμεθα τοὺς φίλους is as true now as it was in the days of Pericles.

The principal charge that his enemies were never tired of reiterating against Lord Lyndhurst, and to which Lord Campbell has taken care to give due prominence on every possible opportunity, is the one which we have already mentioned. It amounts to this, that having professed democratic opinions all the earlier part of his life, upon having been offered a seat in Parliament by Lord Liverpool, with all its contingent prospects and advantages, he suddenly cast his former principles to the winds, and became an uncompromising Tory. That he should merely have changed his opinions from sincere conviction would have been a venial matter enough, for there is hardly a statesman of any note in the present century that has not at some time or another done the same thing. Lord Beaconsfield began life with the repute of being a Liberal and something more, and ended as the leader of the Conservative party. On the other hand, Mr Gladstone, who at the outset of his career was hailed by Macaulay as "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow Sir Robert Peel reluctantly and mutinously," is ending it as the leader of a Cabinet and a Parliament in which Radical influence and Rad-

ical principles largely predominate. Lord Palmerston, who, as Tory Secretary at War in Lord Liverpool's Government, was returned with Copley for Cambridge University, died the Prime Minister of a Liberal Cabinet and the leader of the Liberal party. The late Lord Derby, who, in the heat of the Reform crisis, sprang on the table of Brookes's Club and proclaimed war to the knife to the Tories, lived to be three times a Conservative Premier. Sir Francis Burdett, too, one of the most violent of Lord Lyndhurst's opponents at the same momentous period, who was returned for Westminster on the death of Mr Fox, as a young and ardent Liberal, who had headed the poll for Westminster as a Liberal thirty years later on, two years afterwards occupied the same position in the same constituency as an enthusiastic Tory. Such are some few of the political changes that the whirligig of time has brought about. But to allow one's self to be lured into a sudden conversion from one side to the other by the bait of official advancement, is a charge of a more serious character, and one which, if substantiated, cannot fail to damage the reputation of a statesman. In the case of Lord Lyndhurst, the charge that he held revolutionary sentiments in early life, seems to us to rest entirely on hearsay evidence, the really reliable testimony being all on the other side. We have assertions by Lord Campbell, without a tittle of proof to support them, that in those days "he was a Whig and something more—he was a Jacobin." "He was devotedly attached to republican institutions, and is said to have contemplated without dismay the establishment of an Anglican Republic." Finally, we are told "that he had danced round the Tree of Liberty to the tune of

Ça ira,"—a pretty cool assertion to make of a man who never set foot on French soil till 1814, when he was forty-two years old! We only wonder that, while he was about it, Lord Campbell did not add that he himself was an eyewitness of this revolutionary fandango, and that the performer of it wore the Red Cap of Liberty on his head. Much of these vague reports may have emanated from the supposition that Copley's father, the famous artist, being an American by birth, must necessarily be a republican; and that Copley himself had travelled in America, where for a time he had Volney for his companion, and must therefore have imbibed republican notions. The truth, however, was, that Copley the father, though he disapproved of the treatment of the colonies by the mother country, was a stanch royalist; and that Copley the son not merely laughed at Volney and his doctrines, but, as we shall see, sided in America with the aristocratic party. From first to last, there is not an extract from any speech or letter, or even a word of any authenticated conversation of Copley's, that can be adduced in support of the charge. On the contrary, they are all the other way. In the first place, we have the remarkable extract from his letter to his mother from Philadelphia in 1796: "I have become a fierce aristocrat. This is the country to cure your Jacobins. Send them over here, and they will become quite converted. The Opposition here are a set of villains." In the next place, we have passage after passage in his letters from England to his sister, Mrs Greene, in America (now published for the first time), which breathe the same spirit of loyalty to the throne, and attachment to the institutions of his

country, which distinguished his great speeches of later years. Take, for instance, the following remarks on the Volunteer movement in 1803:—

"Never, upon any occasion, was there a greater display of loyalty, zeal, and unanimity; and before the lapse of a twelvemonth you may expect to hear of events highly honourable to the British character. If we become a military nation, everything is to be expected from that energy, firmness, and constancy of temper which have ever distinguished the people of this country."—P. 97.

We know too, from his own pen, the feelings with which he entered on the legal profession. Thus he writes of that profession to his brother-in-law, Mr Greene, whose timely loan of £1000 had enabled him to continue in it:—

"Assisted by your friendship, I am now to launch my bark into a wider sea. I am not insensible of the dangers with which it abounds. But while to some it proves disastrous and fatal, to others it affords a passage to wealth, *or what is of more value than wealth*, to reputation and honours."—P. 101.

Is the man who held these noble sentiments likely, but a few years afterwards, to have deliberately forgone his principles, and sold his services to his political opponents for the prospect of official emolument?

But lastly, we have Lord Lyndhurst's own solemn and oft-repeated declarations, whenever this charge was brought against him in either House of Parliament, as well as in conversation with his friends in after-years, that he had entered Parliament unfettered by any pledge or condition whatsoever, suggested or imposed. Nothing could be more distinct or emphatic than his repudiation of hav-

ing been a Radical in early life, in the well-known scene which occurred at the close of the second reading of the Reform Bill in 1831. Equally emphatic were his unqualified contradictions in 1835, to the same charge, during the discussions on the Municipal Corporations Bill, coupled with the further insinuation by Lord Denman, that he had owed his early successes at the Bar to the prevailing impression that he was a Liberal in politics. His answer to Lord Denman on this head is to our mind crushing:—

Lord Lyndhurst. "I was never engaged but in one political defence. That was on the trial of Watson. *On that occasion Sir Charles Wetherell (a Tory of the Tories) called on me as a common-law lawyer, and asked me if I would agree to join him in the conduct of that defence.* After taking a short time to consider, I answered that I would. Now that is the real history of that transaction."

After a careful study of Sir Theodore's volume, and the fresh light which it throws on his early life, we are more than ever satisfied that his profession of Conservatism was the result of sincere conviction, and that as he was at the end of his life, so he was long before he entered the parliamentary arena. At the same time, his Conservatism was of that class which our Poet-Laureate has so well described as

"Not clinging to some ancient saw;
Not mastered by some modern term;
Not swift nor slow to change, but
firm;
And in its season bring the law."

"Liberal but gradual reform," says Sir Theodore, "had his support always; but he dreaded revolutionary changes, and had no love for the theorists who urged them." On one point, however, his sym-

pathies were certainly far more with the Liberals than the Conservatives. He was deeply imbued with the conviction and necessity of the most complete religious toleration, and was the advocate for the removal of Jewish disabilities long before the exclusion of Jews from Parliament ceased to be a cardinal item of a Conservative faith.

Want of space alone prevents us from giving a full *résumé* of Sir Theodore Martin's clear and well-arranged Memoir, which from first to last is full of interest. It is almost needless for us to say that we most emphatically dissent from the views we have seen elsewhere expressed, that his volume adds nothing to the information the public possessed before on the mental and moral qualities of Lord Lyndhurst, or to the secret history of his important part in English parliamentary politics. Still less can we endorse the statement, that while Sir Theodore has avenged the memory of Lord Lyndhurst on the memory of Lord Campbell, the majestic personality of the former is made to disappear in the smoke of the battle. On the contrary, not only, as it seems to us, is the victory of the avenger a very complete one, but as the smoke lifts from the battle-field, the majestic personality of him whose cause Sir Theodore has espoused is made to stand forth in all its grand proportions. Not merely has the early life of Lord Lyndhurst been placed before the public in its proper light, but his countrymen have now, for the first time, presented to them an opportunity of judging impartially of the merits of his career as a statesman and a lawyer. As regards his early life, it has been complained that there is an absence of anecdotes of his childhood; but to this it may fairly be

answered, that anecdotes of childhood are rather difficult to obtain in the case of a man who was born 112 years ago, who kept no diary and destroyed his correspondence, and who was sixty-five years old when he married the wife who still survives him. Sufficient light, however, is now let in upon his childhood to show that he was a youth of a bright and playful spirit, a pleasant temper, and a thoroughly kind heart. We read of his fondness for both his parents, especially for his mother, who seems by Sir Theodore's description of her to have been indeed "a perfect woman, nobly planned." His letters from the University of Cambridge, where his career was crowned with the brilliant success of being second wrangler and Smith's Prizeman, are unfortunately few in number, but they are all written in a most affectionate strain, and prove his earnest desire to justify the high opinion which his family circle had formed of his superior powers. Though the young Copley would appear to have made mathematics, chemistry, and physical science his chief studies, he evidently, at the same time, had a great love for classical literature, which remained with him through life. Proofs of this are to be found scattered broadcast through Sir Theodore Martin's volume, not merely in the apt classical quotations and illustrations with which his speeches abound, but in a criticism full of point which, but a few months before his death, he wrote and sent to Mr Gladstone, on the latter's recently published translation of the first book of the *Iliad*. Of this criticism Mr Gladstone thought so highly, that he wrote back asking permission to print it in a contemplated preface to his translation. Copley's letters from America—where he went as

a travelling bachelor, after taking his degree at Cambridge—are now published for the first time. They will be found full of interest even at the present day, and prove him to have been a shrewd observer of men and things. So, too, will those which, after his return to England, he wrote to his married sister, Mrs Greene, in America. We have already alluded to and quoted from these letters as proving how widely removed the writer of them must have been from any sympathy with Jacobin opinions; but the notices they also contain of contemporaneous events show how keenly he watched each incident of the great Napoleonic struggle in which England was then engaged, and what pride he felt in the successes of our arms. All these details of Copley's earlier years are now for the first time made known; and we may add, also, that the story of his life, from the time of his being called to the achievement of his first great success at the Bar, has never before been so clearly and correctly told. Instead of a gay and fashionable young man about town, dining at coffee-houses, and thinking only of present enjoyment, we read of a hard-working and indefatigable student, toiling on through long and weary years of waiting and disappointment, and at one time finding his prospects so gloomy that he seriously thought of abandoning the law and entering the Church. We read also how, when the chance of success came to him at last, it found him well prepared to avail himself of it, and how his care in getting up his cases, even to the minutest detail, was one of the principal causes of his subsequent advancement. Let any one who wishes to gauge the amount of care and trouble that Copley would bestow on a case in-

trusted to him, as well as his marvellous quickness in mastering technical details of the most complex character, read the account (p. 123) of the case of *Boville v. Moore* and others,—as to which, by the way, the learned and veracious Campbell is mute. It would hardly have suited his “defective image,” as it has been charitably called, of Copley’s character, to have told how this habitual neglecter of his clients’ cases actually travelled to Nottingham to master the working of the bobbin-net lace machine, which is said to surpass every other in the complex ingenuity of its machinery; how he subsequently returned to London, and on the day of the trial not merely gave a marvellously lucid exposition of the difference of the two machines which were the subject of the action, but worked the model in Court with all the dexterity of an artisan expert in the manufacture. Surely such a man as this was not merely fortunate, but studied hard to deserve the success which he ultimately achieved.

Following his career, as we can now do by the light of Sir Theodore’s narrative, from his first entrance to the Bar in 1804 to his elevation to the Rolls in 1826, we can see that the secret of his rise was that he never threw away a chance. His upward progress was a practical illustration of the noble lines of Lucretius:—

“Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
Noctes atque dies niti præstante labore,
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.”

With the midnight oil and laborious days of his novitiate he laid the foundation of his first great success, and step by step he climbed

the ladder to that which he has told us he valued more than wealth, reputation and honour.

His greatest forensic effort, to our mind, was his speech when Solicitor-General in replying on the whole case in the trial of Queen Caroline. In this battle of giants Copley may fairly be said to have borne himself without fear and without reproach, and to have surpassed all his previous efforts. He rose to reply on the whole case on the forty-fourth day of the trial, before an assembly wearied with the length of the inquiry, and nigh satiated with the length and excellence of preceding speeches, including Brougham’s celebrated defence. He spoke for two days with unabated clearness and vigour, passing from “grave to gay, from lively to severe,” and illustrating and enlivening his argument by happy classical parallels and quotations. We can well imagine, as we read Sir Theodore’s extracts, especially that in which Copley deals with Denman’s most infelicitous parallel of the Queen to Nero’s wife Octavia, that his reply must have kept the attention of the assembled peers from first to last, and formed, as Sir Theodore says, a not unworthy close to the long series of remarkable speeches which had been delivered in the course of the inquiry.

Such was Copley as a barrister. On his career as a judge it will be unnecessary for us to dwell long. The reputation which he gained amongst his legal brethren, during his short tenure of the office of Master of the Rolls, of having every quality to make him a distinguished judge, he amply justified during the four years he was Chief Baron. He raised the reputation of the Court to the highest point, and indeed entirely changed its character by the despatch given

by him to the consideration of cases, and the respect inspired by his decisions. Even Lord Campbell cannot withhold from him his tribute of admiration. "I often went into Lyndhurst's Court," he says, "and as often I admired his wonderful quickness of apprehension, his forcible and logical reasoning, his skilful commixture of sound law and common-sense." He adds, too, that he was a great favourite with the Bar on account of his general courtesy. But Lord Campbell can never give praise without a proportionate admixture of blame. "He was, however," he adds, "reckless as to the fate of suitors, and only whilst he was in Court cared for or thought of the case of which he had to dispose." But that very wonderful quickness of apprehension which extorted Lord Campbell's admiration, would of itself be sufficient to account for the rapidity with which he despatched causes. As a rule, he could do on the spur of the moment what other judges required lengthened consideration and study to accomplish; but where time for careful preparation was required, no man less grudged it. As in the celebrated case of *Small v. Attwood*, he would take a year, if necessary, to deliberate over his judgment, which would thenceforth remain one of the traditional glories of the judicial bench. His summings up, too, of cases to a jury, made without a single note, were marvels of brevity and lucidity; and Sir Theodore quotes a statement made by Lord Lyndhurst to Mr Whitwell Elwin, that this power was the result of a resolution taken by him, long before he became a judge, to acquire the habit. This he did by the constant practice, whenever he was in Court, of digesting the evidence in his own mind, as if it was his func-

tion at the close to state it in the clearest and compactest form to the jury.

As he was as Chief Baron, so he was as Lord Chancellor. He never delivered judgment in any important case, or spoke on any question of constitutional principle or legal reform, without producing the impression that he was so thoroughly master of the whole law on the subject, that it cost him no effort to state it with a clearness and a brevity unattained by any lawyer of his time. His impartiality, too, was universally recognised. Though party feeling was often at its highest during his tenures of the office of Lord Chancellor and Chief Baron, and he himself was often violently assailed, no man could ever say of him that he allowed the passions of the politician to influence the conclusions of the judge.

But great as the reputation of Lord Lyndhurst undoubtedly was as a lawyer and a judge, it is by the prominent part that he played in the domestic politics of the early half of this century that in our opinion his name will live amongst future generations. The fame of the statesman will survive when that of the legal luminary is perchance beginning to grow dim, though at present the lustre of both burns with equal brightness. And this is a special merit that we must accord to Sir Theodore Martin's biography, that for the first time we have set before us a clearly written and consecutive narrative of the public portion of Lord Lyndhurst's political career. We may trace it step by step from the time of his election as member for Yarmouth in 1818, till the time when, leaning on a hand-rail, and rising with difficulty to his feet, he spoke his last speech in the House of Lords in 1861. He did not enter Parliament young,

nor was it his lot to take the House of Commons by storm with the brilliant success of a maiden speech. He entered the House with a high legal reputation, which he well sustained on the two occasions on which he addressed it during his first session; but he was at that time too actively employed in his profession, and too dependent on its emoluments, to hang on nightly in Parliament. Even after his appointment as Solicitor-General in the following year, 1819, his speeches were few, the most important being that which he made on introducing one of the famous Six Acts, the Seditious Meetings Prevention Bill. Even this task devolved upon him accidentally, in consequence of the sudden illness of the Attorney-General; but he was not the man, as we have already shown, to be taken unawares, and he considerably enhanced his parliamentary reputation by the admirable clearness with which he explained the scope of the measure. His duties, in fact, as Solicitor-General, were far more important outside than within the walls of Parliament; and this was the time that he was steadily adding to his forensic fame by his success in defending Mr John Murray, the well-known publisher of the 'Quarterly Review,' in an action for libel brought by Colonel Macirone—by the prosecution of the Cato Street conspirators—and by his masterly speech in the trial of Queen Caroline. It was only after his appointment as Master of the Rolls in 1827—of which Lord Eldon said that he went to school in the lower form (the Rolls), to qualify him to remove into the higher, if he takes the Chancellorship—that he first took part in a great debate of a strictly party character. This was on Sir Francis Burdett's motion in favour of Catholic Emancipation,

when the celebrated "Toby Phillpott's" episode occurred, which led to temporary misunderstanding between Copley and Canning. The breach, however, was very soon healed; and a week afterwards Canning, who, in the meanwhile, in consequence of Lord Liverpool's illness, had been called on by the King to form a Ministry, offered the Chancellorship to Copley, who took it with the title of Lord Lyndhurst.

Up to this time he had undoubtedly achieved a greater distinction as a speaker at the Bar than in Parliament, though he was recognised as a ready and effective debater, and a master of lucid exposition. During the first two years of his Chancellorship—though steadily establishing his judicial reputation, and possessing an influence in the Cabinet second only to that of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, whose Government had succeeded to the short-lived Administrations of Canning and Lord Goderich—he took but little part in the political debates of the House of Lords. But more stirring political times were now at hand. The hour was rapidly approaching when the settlement of the Catholic claims could no longer be delayed, and behind Catholic Emancipation Parliamentary Reform was rearing its head. Ireland was in a state verging on rebellion, and Peel had finally satisfied himself that concession to the Catholics could no longer be delayed with safety. From this moment, until the termination of his third Chancellorship in 1846, we regard Lord Lyndhurst as by far the most conspicuous figure in the House of Lords, if not in the entire political arena. He shared with the Duke and Sir Robert Peel the obloquy that the Cabinet naturally incurred by their change of views on

the Catholic question, and he met the storm fearlessly and frankly. His speech on the second reading of the Catholic Emancipation Bill raised him for the first time to that rank as a speaker in the House of Lords which he afterwards held with an ever-increasing fame.

To the long struggle for Catholic Emancipation succeeded the agitation for Parliamentary Reform, which the French Revolution of 1830 fanned into a burning question. We need not tell how the famous anti-Reform speech of the Duke of Wellington accelerated the downfall of his Ministry; how Lord Grey succeeded the Duke as Prime Minister, and Brougham succeeded Lord Lyndhurst as Chancellor. The latter accepted from Lord Grey the office of Chief Baron, with the express understanding that he was to be free and unfettered as to his course of political action. He made good use indeed of his freedom. With the crisis of the Reform Bill he rose to the full height of the occasion, and became, in fact, the most formidable opponent of the measure. On the fifth and last night of the debate on the second reading, after Brougham had closed the finest of his many great oratorical displays by literally supplicating the House "on his bended knees" not to reject the Bill, Lord Lyndhurst rose and delivered a speech in every way worthy of the occasion, and marked throughout by a strain of impressive eloquence. Sir Theodore Martin quotes largely from it; and indeed the whole speech is worth a careful study, now that many of the changes which the speaker foretold as the result of the measure have been effected, and we are apparently on the eve of others which the strongest opponent of the Bill would then have hardly ventured

to predict. Half a century has gone by since that momentous night, and the great majority of the country has apparently decided irrevocably against the line then taken by the Tory party. But it is impossible to refuse our tribute of admiration to the masterful eloquence of their foremost champion, to the indomitable courage with which he rallied his forces till the struggle became hopeless, and met with calm indifference the torrent of abuse and calumny that the Reformers freely heaped on one whom they justly regarded as their stoutest-hearted and most dangerous foe.

To the crisis which ensued we will allude later on, as being one of two occasions in Lord Lyndhurst's career, when, if his own views had been acted upon, he might possibly have changed the current of our political history. For the next three years Lyndhurst, save occasionally taking a prominent part in debate on measures of legal reform, was mainly occupied with his judicial duties as Chief Baron. But in 1835 came the hurried return of Peel from Italy, the formation of his Government, with Lord Lyndhurst a second time Chancellor, the issue of the celebrated Tamworth Manifesto, and the dissolution of Parliament. Released from his judicial work by the speedy fall of Peel's first and short-lived Government, Lyndhurst again became a conspicuous figure in Parliament. Disheartened by his defeat, and by his failure to amend the Municipal Corporations Bill in the Commons, Peel temporarily retired to Drayton Manor; and the amendment of this most important measure, which had come up to the Lords in a most objectionable and unworkable form, devolved entirely on Lord Lyndhurst. He performed his task with

an honest desire to improve the Bill; and the best proof that he did so is, that the Commons accepted nearly all his most important amendments. The charge of the Bill was intrusted to Lord Brougham, between whom and his great rival many sharp passages occurred, as amendment after amendment was successfully carried. But its progress through committee was notable for the thrice repeated attack on Lord Lyndhurst for having been a renegade to the political principles of his earlier years, in which we have already noted the signal discomfiture of his three assailants.

The session of 1836 was marked by two of his most remarkable speeches. The first was that in which he replied to the fierce invectives which O'Connell, Sheil, and others heaped upon him for having, as they asserted during the debate on the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill, spoken of the Irish as "aliens in blood, religion, and language." No such phrase is to be found in 'Hansard,' and Lord Lyndhurst to his latest day denied that he ever used it. The plain truth seems to be, that a passage of his speech, quoted by Sir Theodore Martin, which dwelt on the original division of the people into English and Irish, and their subsequent further division into English and Protestant, Irish and Catholic, was unfairly condensed into an epigrammatic phrase for the purpose of making him obnoxious to the Liberal, and especially to the Irish Liberal party. Sir Theodore gives lengthened extracts from Lord Lyndhurst's eloquent and complete vindication of the language which he actually used. He was never happier in the whole course of his career than in the manner in which he dealt with his House of Commons assailants, especially

in his scathing invective against O'Connell, and his comparison of the great Liberator to Catiline. There is this remarkable feature also about the speech, that from first to last it is, if possible, even more applicable to the present feeling of Ireland towards England, when, in spite of sop after sop that has been thrown to the Irish Cerberus, its howl for separation and Home Rule is louder than ever. This first act of the "alien" drama had a still more sensational sequel in the following session, when the Irish Municipal Corporations Bill was again under discussion in the Commons, and an extraordinary scene took place. Mr Lalor Sheil, pointing at Lord Lyndhurst as he sat under the gallery, and working himself up to fury, denounced him as the man who had dared to describe the Irish as aliens in blood, language, and religion. A universal howl of execration rose from the Ministerial benches as all eyes turned in the direction of Sheil's finger. The more excitable members started to their feet, and for a moment it seemed as if they would precipitate themselves on the object of their fury, who sat calm and perfectly unmoved through the storm.

"Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescunt."

The interposition of the Speaker soon restored order, and the tumult subsided. Lord Lyndhurst, however, had an ample revenge upon the Ministerial benches when the Bill came up to the Lords. He denounced the Government as existing solely by the support, both in England and Ireland, of open and avowed enemies of the Protestant Establishment; and again declared, in a spirit of true prophecy, that concession after conces-

sion would lead to the one final demand for the repeal of the Union. The Bill was thrown out on the second reading by a majority of eighty-six; and was only passed in 1840, after it had been materially modified in the direction that Lord Lyndhurst had indicated.

But the session of 1836 was also memorable for his delivery on the 18th of August of the first of those celebrated reviews of the session, which did so much to shake the Melbourne Administration. The immediate effect of this speech, which is as remarkable for its resistless argumentative force as for the sparkling humour of its lighter passages, was immense, both upon Parliament and the country. Perhaps the best proof of its instant success in the Lords is to be found in its effect upon Lord Melbourne, the most genial and good-tempered of men. Pierced as he was through every joint of his harness, he rose to reply in a towering passion, and did his best to make up with bitter personality for want of argument. But from the Land's End to John O'Groat's the speech was read, marked, learnt, and inwardly digested, to bear fruit in due season for the Conservative party.

On the 23d of August 1839 he delivered another "review of the session," if possible more crushing and scathing than his former one; and Lord Melbourne, in attempting to answer, lost his temper still more thoroughly. But on this occasion his antagonist had a powerful ally in Lord Brougham, who, while professing no sympathy with Conservative opinions, played to perfection the part of "candid friend" to the Government.

In 1841 the hour of triumph came. The Melbourne Government, beaten by one on a vote of no confidence, moved by Sir Robert

Peel himself, dissolved Parliament, when their supporters were scattered at the polling-booths like chaff before the wind. Immediately on the meeting of the new Parliament, a vote of no confidence was carried by a majority of 91, in a house of 629 members; and Peel was called on to form a Ministry. Thus, for the third and last time, and in the sixty-ninth year of his age, Lord Lyndhurst occupied the Woolsack.

This is a period over which we must pass rapidly. Hitherto we have spoken chiefly of the prominent position taken by Lord Lyndhurst as one of the foremost champions of his party, and we have endeavoured to show how eminently his sage counsel, his unflinching courage, and unrivalled debating powers, contributed to the rally of the Conservatives after the rout of 1832, and led up to their triumphant reinstallation in office in 1841. But any estimate of his parliamentary career would be imperfect indeed that did not take into consideration the conspicuous services he rendered to the cause of legal reform, to which in his last Chancellorship, and indeed to within a few years of his death, he most energetically devoted himself. But he had been identified with it from the first moment of his entering the House of Lords, and it was owing almost entirely to his incessant watchfulness and clear grasp of details that several of the most prominent but crudely devised measures of his great but restless and impulsive rival Brougham were either rejected or amended into working order. During his last Chancellorship, however, Brougham and he were generally found upon the same side, bringing their combined powers to bear upon their future biographer Lord Campbell, who, as a rule,

suffered considerably in every encounter.

Lyndhurst remained a member of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet till the Free Trade question spread disunion in the ranks of the Conservative party, and the coalition of Liberals and Protectionists to resist the Coercion Bill in 1846 drove the Premier from office. He stood by Peel when the latter was forced, sorely against his will, to be the instrument for repealing the Corn Laws, and remained staunch to his leader amidst the alienation of old friends and disruption of party ties, that were the inevitable consequence of so decisive a change of policy. But advancing years and rapidly failing eyesight were beginning to tell upon him; and when the memorable debate and division, so graphically described in Disraeli's *Life of Lord George Bentinck*, tolled the knell of Peel's Administration, no one more gladly hailed the prospect of repose than his Lord Chancellor.

We have already spoken of two occasions in Lyndhurst's career, when, if his own views had been acted on, he might possibly have changed the current of our political history. The first was in the crisis that ensued after he had defeated in committee the Reform Bill of 1832, when he was sent for by the King. The Duke of Wellington and he endeavoured to form a Ministry, but were ultimately obliged to abandon their attempt, in consequence of the refusal of Peel to share the responsibility. Lord Brougham always thought, as he himself has told us, in a passage quoted by Sir Theodore from his *Memoirs*, that a great opportunity was lost by Peel's refusal; and others have expressed the same opinion. There is no doubt much force in the arguments used by Lord Brougham in the passage in

question; but looking at the tremendous responsibility involved, we cannot wonder that Peel shrank from the venture.

It seems almost certain to us, that, before a Conservative Government could have matured and brought in a Reform Bill that would have commanded the support of their party, the country would have broken out into open revolution. In point of fact, it was on the verge of revolution at that very moment. When noblemen of high rank seriously contemplate non-payment of taxes, and £1,800,000 of gold is withdrawn from the Bank of England in three days, the breaking of the storm is nigh at hand. But supposing they had so far been allowed fair-play, our recollections of 1867 are yet too fresh to enable us to believe that any Reform Bill brought in by a Conservative minority would have been accepted by an overwhelming Liberal majority without the introduction of radical alterations. Its rejection by the Lords would then have involved a fresh and more serious crisis; its acceptance, on the other hand, would have weakened still further the Conservative strength, and given us a House of Commons of a far more democratic character than the one which was actually elected. We cannot, then, wholly regret that Lord Lyndhurst's attempt failed, and that he and the Duke preferred for the nonce to bend to the storm like the reed, rather than face its full violence, to shiver like the oak, as in all probability would have been their fate.

The second occasion to which we allude, was when, after the fall of Sir Robert Peel's Government in 1846, Lord Lyndhurst made an effort to reunite the Protectionists and the Peelites,—the details of which attempt, so far as they are

known, are fully given by Sir Theodore Martin. In this case we think it much to be regretted that the attempt, which was made in a perfectly legitimate and open manner, should have proved a failure. Had it succeeded, the ablest and most brilliant of the originally victorious and compact Conservative phalanx of 1841 would never have been forced, as they ultimately were, into permanent secession to the Liberal camp. The Conservative party would not have been condemned to an eighteen years' banishment to the cold shade of Opposition, varied only by three brief intervals of office in a minority. During two of these they were allowed to occupy the Treasury bench on sufferance till their opponents had made up their differences; and in the third they followed their leader in his "leap in the dark," and found themselves landed in household suffrage. But the wounds of the Protectionists were still fresh and bleeding; and the indignation of their leader, Lord George Bentinck, was still at fever-heat with the "janizaries and renegades," to use his own term, who had aided and abetted Peel in inflicting them. The opportunity was lost; and it needed all the subsequent strategy of Mr Disraeli, aided by the unparalleled blundering of the Gladstone Government from 1868 to 1874, to bring the Conservatives once more to power upon the shoulders of a triumphant majority.

The secret history of these two periods will never, perhaps, be fully revealed; but Sir Theodore's narrative throws considerable light on the relations of Lyndhurst with his colleagues, and the estimation in which he was invariably held by them. Nothing appears to be further from the truth than Lord Campbell's oft-

repeated assertions that he was disliked and mistrusted, and rarely, if ever, consulted on any great occasion. With Canning he was on intimate terms almost from the first moment of their acquaintance, and the same may be said of his relations with the Duke of Wellington. What the Duke thought of him as a political coadjutor may be gathered from his language in speaking of him (June 1831) to Mr Charles Greville, as "the best colleague any man ever had,"—adding, "that he should be very sorry to go into any Cabinet of which he was not a member." Nor is there any evidence whatever to bear out Lord Campbell's unsupported assertion that Sir Robert Peel reposed no confidence in Lyndhurst's sincerity; and that, though Lyndhurst and Peel sat together in the Cabinet so long, and never had an open difference, they always entertained a considerable personal dislike of each other, which they took very little pains to conceal. That there was not the same intimacy between the two that existed in the case of Canning and the Duke, is quite possible, for Sir Robert Peel was not one "who wore his heart upon his sleeve." It is quite possible, too, that for some time after Peel's resignation in 1835, there was a time when, in consequence of his retirement to Drayton Manor and apparent chagrin at the short life of his Ministry, many of the Conservative party may have looked to Lyndhurst rather than to him as their future leader. But there is no evidence whatever to show that anything like a rupture or even an estrangement took place at any time between the two; and what Sir Robert Peel thought of Lyndhurst as a colleague may be gathered from the following extract from a letter written by him

in 1848 to Mr F. R. Bonham, M.P., a few days after Lord Lyndhurst had visited him at Drayton :

"I was delighted to see Lyndhurst in such good health and spirits,—delighted to see him

'In that happier hour
Of social converse, ill exchanged for
power.'

I have had some colleagues with whom I have lived, while in office, on terms of greater personal intimacy, but none whose society was more agreeable, or on whom I could more confidently rely when real difficulties were to be encountered."—P. 239.

One of Lord Campbell's statements in substantiation of his view of the relations between Peel and Lyndhurst, that the former wrote his "Tamworth Manifesto" without consulting him, is more than usually reckless. The Tamworth letter, it now plainly appears, was actually discussed and drawn up at a Cabinet dinner at Lord Lyndhurst's house !

Take again the testimony of Mr Gladstone, who was a member of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet of 1841, as given in a letter written to Lady Lyndhurst in August last :

"I have often compared Lord Lyndhurst in my own mind with other men who, since his time, have been my colleagues in the Cabinet, much to the disadvantage, in certain respects, of some of them. Once I remember, in the Peel Cabinet, the conversation happened to touch some man (there are such) who was too fond of making difficulties. Peel said to your husband, 'That is not your way, Lyndhurst.' Of all the intellects I have ever known, his, I think, worked with the least friction."

He left office in 1846, with the determination never to return to it; and to that determination, though tempted by Lord Derby in 1852 with the offer of the Privy Seal or Presidentship of

the Council, combined with an earldom, he rigidly adhered. For the next two years he spent much of his time at Turville Park, looking after his farm, and cultivating his garden, and laying out money in improving the roads of the parish, the people of which still warmly cherish his memory. Through the greater part of 1849, however, the blindness which had for some time been growing upon him increased so much that he could neither read nor write; and it was not till a year later that he was successfully operated on for cataract. Yet during this time he made one of his finest speeches in the House of Lords, that on the Canada Rebellion Losses Bill, concluding with an earnest and mournful expression of a conviction, forced upon him by his age and loss of eyesight, that perhaps he addressed his brother-peers for the last time.

Little could he have dreamed at that moment that his last speech in that House was not to be delivered till twelve years later, when he was within a few days of his ninetieth birthday. Little could he have dreamed, too, of the grand and stately spectacle he himself was destined to present to his country during that period—how he was to be at once the "old man eloquent" of the House of Lords, and the Nestor both in speech and counsel of the Conservative party. If his weight of years had dimmed his eyesight and enfeebled his frame, he was spared from that which the great Roman Satirist tells us is the worst affliction that old age can bring, the decay of intellectual power and the loss of memory. He was possessed in an eminent degree of

"That which should accompany
old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of
friends."

And high as his fame as an orator was before, it was destined before his death to shine with a yet brighter lustre. Fain would we linger long over his closing years, and dwell upon his marvellous oratorical achievements; but we have now reached a period in which many of those who had then won their spurs in the parliamentary arena are still actively engaged in political life. There are many such who can remember how, at the rumour that Lyndhurst was going to speak, every available space in the House of Lords, from floor to gallery, was thronged with an anxiously expectant audience. They can remember not merely the eloquence, but the wise and generous patriotism, that marked his celebrated speeches on our National Defences and the Naval Reserve. Nor are they likely to have forgotten the knowledge of constitutional law and the force and clearness of statement which were conspicuous in the speech for the rejection of the Bill for abolishing the Paper Duty, which he delivered on his eightyninth birthday. A year later, and with his mighty intellect unimpaired, and his power of sarcasm unblunted, he spoke for the last time, and his voice was heard no more in the assembly where he had so often

“Drawn audience and attention still as night
On summer’s noontide air.”

We can say truly that eloquence like his has never been heard there since, and its exact counterpart may possibly never be heard there again. His speaking, from its somewhat severe simplicity of style, was less successful in the Commons than it was in the House of Lords; but in that assembly his voice exercised an influence which has rarely, if ever, been surpassed. His

oratory was lucid, high-reaching, and sustained, and it was combined with a marvellous voice and a faultless accuracy of expression. No man of his time had a greater power of condensing into the fewest words the largest amount of fact and argument; and in the art of clearly and logically stating a case, whether at the Bar or in Parliament, he stood without a rival. We may add that, though he elaborately thought over his subject, he scarcely ever even mentally prepared a phrase, much less wrote out a sentence. In this he was in direct contrast to his great rival Brougham, who elaborately prepared and committed to memory all the great passages in his speeches, weaving them into the extempore portions with such wonderful dexterity, as Lyndhurst himself admitted, that the seams were never apparent. On the other hand, the strongest testimony to the merits of Lyndhurst’s speaking is that offered by Brougham himself, who, writing in 1861 of their many encounters on the Municipal Corporations Bill, says:—

“He was a most effective adversary in the Lords. His legal learning and reputation; his former official experience and character; his admirable power of clear, condensed statement, far exceeding that of any man I ever knew; his firm courage, his handsome presence, his musical voice, his power of labour when he chose, though generally hating work,—made him a most formidable antagonist.”

Formidable antagonists as they both were, each, even in the fiercest moments of party warfare, respected the other as a foeman worthy of his steel. “In all our conflicts, political and professional,” said Brougham in 1835, “nothing has for a moment interfered with that friendship which unites us personally.” Later on

they were not merely personal friends, but fellow-workers together in the field of legal reform, where, individually and conjointly, they exercised an influence in shaping the statute-book, such as no two men have in all probability ever before possessed. Their friendship and close companionship remained unbroken to the last; and the touching words which Brougham wrote to Lady Lyndhurst after his friend's death, "It is a daily blank to me," show how deeply he felt his loss. What he thought of his wonderful powers in later life may be gathered from the following passage from the letter written by Mr Gladstone to Lady Lyndhurst, from which we have already quoted:—

"It was at the time either of the life peerage given to Lord Wensleydale, or of the Conspiracy Bill, I cannot say which, I called on Lord Lyndhurst, wishing to get legal light upon the question. Either Brougham was there, or he came in soon. Lord Lyndhurst expounded the matter in the most luminous way from his point of view. Brougham went into raptures, and used these words, 'I tell you what, Lyndhurst, I wish I could make an exchange with you. I would give you some of my walking power, and you should give me some of your brains.' I have often told the story, with this brief commentary, that the compliment was the highest I have ever known to be paid by one human being to another."

Another testimony that we cannot refrain from quoting is that of Mr Disraeli, who spoke of Lord Lyndhurst as one of the two best friends he ever had, and wrote thus of him in the general preface to the edition of his works which appeared in 1870: "The world has recognised the political courage, the versatile ability, and the masculine eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst; but his intimates only were

acquainted with the tenderness of his disposition, the sweetness of his temper, and the playfulness of his bright and airy spirit." We may add, that the regard and affection the younger statesman felt for the elder was fully reciprocated. Lord Lyndhurst had the highest opinion of Mr Disraeli's originality and independence, and prophesied his future greatness at a time when many who afterwards worshipped him as the incarnation of political wisdom, were wont to regard him as an eccentric political charlatan.

Though the greater portion of Sir Theodore Martin's book is naturally taken up with Lord Lyndhurst's public career, his narrative is interspersed with many little details that throw fresh light upon his private life. They show how truly he possessed those good qualities of heart which Mr Disraeli has attributed to him. They show that he was not merely a good and dutiful son to his parents, but a fond husband to his wife, and a loving father to his children. They show him not merely in his house in George Street, surrounded and courted by all who had genuine claims to distinction in London society, but in his country place at Turville, keen as the veriest country squire for the improvement of his little farm, and the cultivation of his garden. They show with what calmness and patience he bore one of the greatest deprivations with which man can be visited—the loss of eyesight. Let any one who wishes for a charming sketch of what Lord Lyndhurst was in private life in his later years, read the letter (p. 508) written to Sir Edmund Beckett by Miss Stewart, a lady who lived as governess and companion to Lord Lyndhurst's daughters for many years. "One touch of nature

makes the whole world kin," and we can well understand how tears rose to the writer's eyes as she witnessed the following scene, which happened while his blindness was coming fast upon him :—

"One morning I went into his room with some message or request, and was witness to a little scene that I shall never forget. He was in his easy-chair, with a grave, almost a solemn expression on his face, so intent on his employment that my presence was unnoticed. Before him, the Church Prayer-Book held open by both her small hands, stood his youngest daughter, of seven or eight years of age, hearing him repeat the prayers, and now and then prompting and correcting him. The old man, the judge and statesman, and the little child so occupied, made a picture that could not be seen without bringing tears to the eyes. He liked no one to hear him his lesson, he said, but his little girl."

The whole of the last chapter of Sir Theodore's book, from which this passage is taken, will, we are sure, be read with much interest, for many of its details are new to his readers. There are extracts from letters written by Lord Lyndhurst at this time to his nephew, Mr Amory, in America, showing how keenly he watched the terrible civil conflict in which the country of his birth was then engaged. There are his literary criticisms on various authors, from Homer to 'Tom Brown's School Days;' and there is a striking testimony to his ready grasp of scientific problems, from so competent an authority as Sir James Nasmyth. And there are touching letters of condolence and tributes to his memory, addressed to Lady Lyndhurst after his death, by the Queen, by Lord Derby, Lord Granville, and others to whom he was both a wise counsellor and a valued friend. His study in his latter days was the

resort of leading men of both parties, who eagerly sought and duly appreciated his advice on critical public questions, knowing that it would be entirely free from party bias. We have spoken of him already as the Nestor of the Conservatives, and he resembled the Pylian sage not merely in that he was

"The smooth-tongued chief, from whose
persuasive lips
Sweeter than honey flowed the stream
of speech ;"

but like him he had outlived two generations of men—

"And o'er the third he now held royal
sway."

He had visited Washington at Mount Vernon; he had attended lectures on art under Reynolds; he had listened to the eloquence of the giants of the past—of Pitt and Fox, of Burke and Sheridan. Like Nestor, too, well might he say—

"Such men I never saw, and ne'er shall
see,
As Peirithous and Dryas, wise and
brave,
Ceneus, Exadius, godlike Polypheme,
And Theseus, Ægeus' more than mortal
son,
The mightiest they among the sons of
men."

He lived for rather more than two years after his last speech in the House of Lords, and died peacefully and calmly, with his family gathered round his bedside in his home in George Street, on the 12th of October 1863, in the ninety-second year of his age.

Like the Agricola of one of his favourite Latin authors, he was "Felix non claritate tantum vitæ, verum etiam opportunitate mortis." He died at a time of perhaps the most complete political calm in England that has been known in

the present century. Public attention was concentrated on the civil war in America, and not the faintest echo of party strife had been heard during the session, which was one of the shortest and most uneventful in the annals of Parliament. Only a few days, too, before his death, Lord Russell, speaking at Blairgowrie, had remarked that we had reached a period in our legislative progress when the country was inclined rather to "rest and be thankful" than to make new roads. Such a period was surely not out of keeping with the closing scene of one for whom the heavy burden and fierce heat of public life was long passed and gone, and the gradual setting of whose sun had been so peaceful and withal so brilliant. His work on earth was done—he could rest and be thankful.

In taking leave of Sir Theodore Martin's work, we must once more offer him our congratulations upon the success he has achieved, which has added fresh laurels to those he has already won in the path of biography. He has had, as he acknowledges, a difficult and painful task to perform, and in our judgment he has performed it thoroughly and conscientiously. He has been asked, since the publication of his book, whether he thinks it bestows either dignity or credibility on a biographer to be employed by others to blacken the character of a distinguished man previously un-

known to him. To us the right answer to such a question seems clear enough, that his employment has been the reverse of this. His employment has been to clear the character of one distinguished man from the cloud of calumny and misstatement with which another had blackened it; and if, as the blackness lifted from the fair fame of the one it has gradually settled round that of the other, we think it pretty obvious that the breath of public opinion has blown it in the right direction. That the calumnies of Lord Campbell will now remain for ever buried in Cimmerian darkness, we will not undertake to say. As Lord Lyndhurst himself remarked in reference to such attacks,—“The sting of the wasp may fester after the venomous insect has left his life and sting in the wound: although refuted, these attacks are not harmless; they have a public effect, sometimes a lasting effect. Persons remember the attack—they do not always remember the defence.” But from henceforth the bane will not be without its antidote, and the last volume of “The Lives of the Chancellors” will not stand alone on the libraries of the future as the biography of one who has been truly called “a great, free, and clear spirit,” who was at once one of the ablest of English lawyers, and one of the most renowned of English statesmen.

THE RECENT DISPUTE IN THE COAL-TRADE.

COAL is, as we all know well, of immense importance to us in our households, our factories, and our vehicles. It is not the only fuel, nor the only source of artificial light; but the use of it has become so general, and the supply of it in immense quantities can, under ordinary conditions, be so certainly relied on, that we may fairly call it our grand, our indispensable, resource for producing heat and flame. Supposing it to be exhausted or otherwise lost to us, there is no known combustible that could wholly, or to any great extent, supply its place. Hence a stoppage, even though it should be of brief duration, in the supply of coal, would operate prejudicially on our home industries, our commerce, our comfort, our health, and our lives. A long stoppage would operate ruinously on the same things.

This indispensable fuel, though we know that it exists all round us, and perhaps beneath our feet—though we look upon it as a marketable commodity, procurable at all times for a price—is nevertheless at our call only so long as a body of capitalists and a body of miners sufficient for the requirements of the time deem it worth their while to effect the extraction of it from the mines. The capitalists alone cannot put it into the market, neither can the miners alone; there must be co-operation of both these factors.

Fortunately for the wellbeing of society, it is always for the interest of capitalists and miners to work harmoniously together in the raising of the coal and making it ready for distribution and use. But, though these two classes are

equally concerned in extracting the coal, their interests are not precisely the same; and when these interests clash, or are thought by those interested to clash, there is danger that the public may, in a greater or less degree, be deprived of the desired supply. Capitalists, if they cannot keep their mines going at a reasonable profit, will be disposed to close them; miners, if they be discontented with the conditions under which they give their labour, may choose to withhold it. In either case the dissatisfaction will be inconvenient and expensive to the consumer—that is, to the public. It would be ruinous to the public if there could be perfect unanimity and concerted method of procedure, among capitalists or among miners, when either class may be inclined to cut off the supply.

Should such a complete stoppage of the supply occur as is above supposed, it would probably be for the sake of either profits or wages. There are other possible causes, but, for the purposes of this paper, it is unnecessary to look at the matter except as one of money.

In case, then, of a general stoppage of the supply in a given region, say all over England, the public would be compelled, as far as its means would stretch, to pay higher prices for coal brought from distant places. Cooking, warming, &c., are indispensable at home; and industries, if they could be maintained without loss under such circumstances, would not be allowed to stand still because coal should be very dear. But we may be very sure that householders would, in such a case, reduce their consumption of coal as low as pos-

sible; and that manufacturers and others would cease to buy coal at all whenever it should become so expensive that they could no longer, after paying the heavy price for it, carry on their works at a profit. Hence the reduction of the supply has a tendency to more or less diminish the demand. Demand once extinguished cannot be relied on to appear again in the same direction as before, even should the normal supply and the normal prices return, because, during the coal-famine, every one would be turning his eyes towards some foreign source, hoping to get fuel from thence; and if a foreign supply should come hither and satisfy purchasers, they might probably choose to continue to deal with the foreigner.

From this it is clear that a very extensive and well-concerted stoppage of the supply of coal all over England and Wales, though it might for a time cause dire distress, and even have the effect of temporarily sending up the price, would in the long-run damage the English trade in coal. Scotland, supposing it to be outside of the concert to stop the supply, and neighbouring Continental countries that have coal, would find, as long as English high prices should obtain, an excellent opportunity of bringing their coal to a good market, and perhaps of keeping their footing in that market.

What is true of a whole country, or of a very large district, will be equally true of a small district. Hence a coal-famine in any region is likely to eventually drive away business from that region.

With reference to what was said above concerning manufacturers ceasing to buy coal when it should

become very dear, it must be remembered that manufactured goods are subject to exactly the same laws as the coal. If the cost of producing them should become, through the dearth of coal, so heavy that the producers can secure a profit only by selling them at a much enhanced price, their market too will soon be spoiled by the intervention of foreigners who will undersell them.

Throughout these considerations it must be borne in mind that, should manufacturing business at any time be so brisk and prosperous generally that manufacturers should be making exorbitant profits, then they would rather submit to a rise in the price of coal than have their prosperity checked, provided the rise should be sufficiently moderate to leave them a margin of profit. Again, if coal-owners should be profiting to a very great extent, they can afford to increase the wages of their miners without raising prices upon the public.

To get a just idea of all the forces which, acting and reacting, govern this business of the coal-supply, we must now give a glance towards the public—the non-manufacturing public, say the householding public—and see how it fares in a time of coal-famine. It must have coal, that is certain, or it can hardly exist; and if it were not naturally aided by other interests, things would go hard with it. But in a community like ours, all aflame with industries, the household consumption of coal is but a fraction of the quantity extracted from the mines. Engines, furnaces, and gas-works consume the chief portion; and we export, too, a substantial amount.¹

¹ 20,000,000 tons or thereabout annually.

And thus, household coal, constituting but a subordinate branch of the business commercially, shares in the vicissitudes which affect the industrial departments. As long, then, as the great industries which can effectually resist unfair or intolerable advances of price, bear the brunt of the struggle for equitable charges, the householder (who, unaided, could hardly protect himself) will not be in danger of much extortion. Thus, iron-works are said to consume about one-third of the coal which comes to market in Great Britain. It would be suicidal, therefore, as above shown, for coal-owners to raise the price above what iron-masters can afford to pay; and the householder, under the wing of the iron-master (so to speak), is sheltered from exorbitant charge.

Hitherto we have been regarding prices as regulated by the joint and unanimous action of coal-owners, or miners, or of both together. But in practice such unanimity is hardly ever found. The ultimate disastrous effect upon the coal-trade generally of the unwise forcing up of price is beginning to be understood, and is here and there recognised and acted upon. In mines where the rage for higher wages or profits, or for both, is reckless enough to precipitate a crisis by demanding a higher price, the indiscretion is kept down by the prudent hesitation or refusal of more reflecting neighbours to join in discontented action. It is manifest that if, in a given area, some collieries only were to raise the price, while others were to work on at the old price (quality of the ware being equal), the high-priced coal would be unsold, and increased custom would be conferred upon the works where it could be obtained at the old rate.

So that this difficulty of producing common and joint action operates powerfully against rash or wilful attempts to force up the price when the state of business generally is not such as to justify the rise.

The same course of remarks is applicable when, instead of the struggle being between the coal-trade and other trades, it happens to be between the miners and masters of the coal-trade itself. In many collieries there are agreements according to which the wages of labour are always in proportion to the price of coal; and as it may be presumed that masters will always obtain as high prices as they can without exposing their business to consequent damage, men under such agreements may be confident that they are as well off as circumstances permit. They will not, therefore, be in any hurry to enter into a contest with the employers. The *sliding scale of wages*, as this proportional assignment is called, is thus a great impediment to a general strike or stoppage of work by the men, when it may not be clearly ascertained that there are just and sufficient grounds for a contest and a fair prospect of a lasting advantage resulting from it. Another impediment to a general strike is the knowledge which the men have that they and those dependent on them must suffer in a greater or less degree,—sometimes in a very great degree,—while the strike is in progress. Many are not willing to encounter this certain suffering, and so decline to join in the movement. So there are considerable difficulties in the way when it is desired to organise a general widespread strike; and thus the stability of business and the pockets of private individuals are often protected against sudden, capricious defections of the work-

men, by the prevalence of prudential considerations, and the disinclination to face want and idleness among the more reflecting members of the workmen's own body.

If the master is forced to pay his men more wages, he must do so by parting with a portion of his profits, or by raising prices on the public, or by working at a loss. The last he is not likely to do for a long time, if at all. The second he can only do under strict limitations, as has been shown. The first is possible only when business is prospering. Workmen, therefore, before they talk of striking, would do well to ascertain whether their employers are driving a profitable business, and whether the state of business generally will admit of a rise in the price of coal, before they disorganise their whole calling by ceasing to work.

The above remarks are prefatory to some short notes which it is now proposed to put together concerning the recent dispute in the coal-trade, which threatened at one time to be a very widespread calamity on the community at large, and ultimately to destroy or damage the business of many of the English coal-fields.

It appears that for some time past there has been a belief (becoming gradually stronger) among the coal-miners of certain English districts that they were not sufficiently remunerated for their labour. In November last the men thought the time favourable for acting upon this belief, and for making a demand upon their employers for largely increased wages—in some instances for an increase of 15 per cent; in others, for an increase of 10 per cent on present wages. A great deal has been said at public meetings and through the press concerning the manner in

which the miners were persuaded that they were being wronged. The officers of some of the miners' unions and associations, and gentlemen friendly to socialistic schemes, now much in vogue, have been accused of exciting the men by gross misrepresentations, and of urging them to strike, reckless of the actual condition of trade, and of the severe struggle which a strike at the beginning of winter must inflict on the workmen, whether they might ultimately be successful or not. It is very possible that these officers and others may have themselves been deceived as to the true state of affairs, or that the men may not have required strong persuasion, but have been quite ready of their own unbiassed minds to raise a dispute. The question whether the men were wilfully deceived or not is of secondary importance to the public. The tenderers of bad advice, if there were such, will have been sufficiently punished by the loss of influence, which must have followed the collapse of their plans. We shall not, therefore, here attempt to fix or apportion blame; but merely look upon what occurred as the deliberate acts of the body of the miners.

Without pretending to define very accurately the areas of the dispute, we may say in general terms that it was confined to Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the Midland counties. Northumberland, Durham, and South Wales do not appear to have been to any great extent implicated, as in those regions the sliding scale arrangement obtains largely. The core of the discontent seems to have been the south-west of Yorkshire. We understand that they work by the sliding scale in some collieries in North Wales and in

the Forest of Dean, although that method may not be general in those places. The delegates sent to some public meetings claimed to represent 170,000 miners: it was stated on the part of the coal-owners that they represented no more than 135,000. In either case the numbers were very formidable; and if only 135,000 men had ceased to work, the consequences would probably have been calamitous all round.¹

The men perceived from the first the importance of making the strike as extensive as possible. It has been explained above why this was important. And they held, personally or by their representatives, many meetings in different northern towns, with a view of ascertaining what their numerical strength was, and how it might best be increased. It is clear that towards the middle of November they considered the adherents to be sufficiently numerous to warrant immediate action; and notices were very generally served upon employers to the effect that, failing a concession of the men's demands, there would be a cessation of work in a fortnight or other legally prescribed period of time for the notices to extend. It is clear, too, that the coal-owners, labour-masters, and the thinking part of the public in the discontented districts, also believed in the men's power to effect a disturbance, the whole consequences of which they could not foresee, but which must certainly have been highly injurious. We were told by the press of the coal-districts to prepare for evil times, as a strike, whether justifiable or not, was inevitable.

We should note here that, although the miners had taken the serious step of serving their notices,

by which they committed themselves to a loss of their employment if the masters should choose to hold them to the letter of their own documents, yet, as the masters were not at all likely to insist upon a cessation of work according to notice—that is to say, as the masters were not likely to forbid the withdrawal of the notices, the men had not practically taken an irrevocable step. Nevertheless it is clear that those interested, and other observers, had very little confidence in the moderation or accessibility to reason of the miners, but bade us all prepare for a most inconvenient strike, though for perhaps not a long one. As it turned out, they judged the men wrongly.

The coal-owners at this conjuncture appear to have behaved with much firmness and patience. With very few exceptions, they at once advised the men that a 15 per cent or even a 10 per cent rise of wages was impossible. The coal-trade, as they said, was so far from being very prosperous that it could barely keep going at present rates; indeed the last rise in wages, which took place in November 1882, had never been compensated by an improvement in business; so that the difficulty to them was to refrain from making a reduction of wages—as to giving more, it could not be thought of. They offered, in proof of what they had alleged, to show their books—which offer, as far as we can gather, was not accepted.

But there remained this other argument on the part of the men—viz., that although with present prices masters might be unable to afford higher wages, they might, to avert the strike which would press so hardly on the public generally, fairly and reasonably put up the

¹ The total number of coal-miners is computed at 500,000.

price. This argument could not be answered by the demonstration of books like the other; but it was most distinctly answered to the effect that a rise of prices, so far from bringing in larger profits, would send business altogether away from the mines where it might be tried. The men seemed not at all convinced that this result would ensue, and were thought to desire to put it to the test, when a powerful support to the masters presented itself in the intervention of the iron-masters into the dispute. It was declared, on the part of this body, that the iron-works were doing so poor a business that they could not bear to pay a higher price for their coal, and that they must, if coal should become dearer, cease to carry on their works. Some iron-masters, as an earnest of what must follow if the strike should fairly begin, notified to their men in the usual way that their services would be dispensed with after a certain date. This was a benumbing damper to the scheme of forcing up prices. It will be remembered how we said above that one-third of the coal raised is consumed in iron-works; therefore the refusal of iron-masters to submit to a higher price, was decisive of the question whether a higher price should be asked or not.

The threatened coal-owners met frequently and conferred. There was among them complete unanimity as to their position. They prepared for resistance. They formed associations for mutual support. They declared that, if the strike once began, work should not be resumed at any advance of wages; and some even declared that resumption of work should take place only at a reduction of wages.

Days passed on in the latter half of November without the attitude

of either party in the contest being sensibly altered. The press took the question up earnestly: the masters and their agents were indefatigable in endeavouring to put the matter clearly before the men; and the men, contrary to custom and to expectation, were disposed to put aside passion and crude counsel, and to look at their position calmly and with a view to taking the wisest course.

There was long and anxious deliberation; and up to the eve of the expiration of the notices it seemed to outsiders that the strike, with all its dire accompaniments, could hardly be averted. The men, however, if they gave no indication of how they were being moved, were undoubtedly impressed by many representations which had been made to them in the course of the discussion. Many of them showed that they have now some perception of the remote, as well as of the immediate, results of a strike. The most intelligent of them weighed pretty fairly the arguments for and against acting upon the notices.

The expediency of the strike could be maintained only on the assumption either that the masters were deceiving the men as to the profits of the coal business, and that the masters could, out of those profits, very well afford to pay higher wages; or on the assumption that prices could be forced up so as to furnish the means of paying higher wages. There was no other ground but one of these on which it could be pleaded that to strike was advisable, and the masters had emphatically stated that neither of these grounds was solid or real, and had offered every facility for investigation and proof of what they said.

The inexpediency of the strike

had, on the other hand, many potent arguments to sustain it. The first and most obvious was that the pitmen, striking in the depth of winter, must, with their families, be exposed to much misery, let the outcome of the dispute be what it might. The second was that they were very ill provided with any funds to help them along during the period of inaction; for it seems nowhere to be disputed that the means of the unions and associations were very low, and that a large portion of the miners did not belong to any union at all.¹ Again, the stoppage of the coal-works would infallibly produce the stoppage also of the iron-works and other industries dependent upon coal, and so create an extent of pauperism which it was horrible to think of. Beyond this, there was the fear, nay, the certainty, that some districts would refuse to join the movement, and that some collieries even in the agitated districts would not stop; thus, that those who might subject themselves to much suffering by striking would, in effect, undergo privation for the benefit of others, who would incur no privation at all. These were the plain, patent, unconcealable considerations. But to many men capable of taking a broad survey of the condition of things, it was apparent that business is now in such a wavering state, that if once it should cease in any district, it may possibly leave that district for ever. Insufficient as our workmen may deem their wages to be, there is no doubt that in some foreign countries wages are lower still; and for that reason there is imminent danger of the foreigner underselling us even in our own markets. If he were to get the

very favourable opportunity that would be afforded him should prices be arbitrarily forced up in England, he would not fail to use it to our serious disadvantage. Farther off, beyond the intrusion of the foreigner into our markets, is the inevitable quest of cheap labour by the English capitalist, and the introduction of foreign hands—perhaps of the dreaded Chinese.

It is satisfactory to know that our pitmen, after long and anxiously weighing these *pros* and *cons*, decided at last that it is better to endure the present state of things, than to run the great risk of ultimate failure, and encounter the certain immediate misery, which a strike would create. Their calm and discreet regard of the circumstances marks apparently an epoch in business. Now that so many thousand workmen have exercised such dispassionate judgment in reference to a matter which touched them very closely, it is probable that in future disputes we shall find the men using their heads to some purpose, and probing the controversies to the bottom before committing themselves to the fearful issues of strikes. Thus they, and society at large, will be saved from the consequences of blind and hurtful struggles, whether produced by passion and suspicion arising among the men themselves, or by the arts and persuasions of persons who have an interest in urging them to suicidal courses. All of these discords can be brought to the test of examination and reason, if only both sides are willing to approach them in an equitable spirit. As has been said above, the interests of employers and employed are, as regards the outside world, *the very same*. It would

¹ It is stated that four-fifths of the Yorkshire miners are non-unionists.

therefore be wanton folly in either of them to give the outsider an occasion against them by obstinately inflaming internal quarrels.

In some of the journals and gazettes which it has been necessary to consult in following the course of this very important disagreement, we have been concerned to find expressions which read like notes of triumph at the men's failure, and of contemptuous vaunting at what was represented as their ignominious retreat. These expressions we regard as injudicious and unfair. The men deserve to be respected and applauded for declining the contest, not to be derided and scorned. They have achieved a far greater victory than it would have been to have coerced the masters: they have triumphed over prejudice, ignorance, and short-sighted action. We do not look upon them as a beaten faction, but as a body who, by following their understandings and not their tempers, have not only averted a serious calamity in the present, but have introduced a practice which may, as we hope, become established, to the avoiding of confusion, strife, and lasting injury in the future. No doubt there were, during the discussion, provoking and injurious observations made, and recrimination was sometimes a good deal heated; how could it be otherwise, where so many voices were raised, and where each man spoke only as he felt? We look not to how individuals may have spoken or voted, but to the sound and sensible conclusion which has been come to by the whole body.

What has just been said will carry more weight with it if readers take into account the misleading influences to which workmen in these days are subject. They are continually being told that they,

being the producing hands, are entitled to a much larger share than they now enjoy of everything which is the result of their labour. They are defrauded, it is said, of their natural rights by the grasping capitalists, who gather to themselves all the great rewards of toil, and leave to the toilers only the barest modicum that nature will let them work upon.

There are always in the world a number of well-meaning, kindly-disposed persons, who busy themselves in the endeavour to rectify what appear to them to be great blots and blemishes in the order of things, without much, or without any, idea how in practice their desires are to be realised. They simply decree and will that such and such a dispensation of things is unsatisfactory or vicious, and that it shall be rectified forthwith; while their efforts to carry out their decrees are little better than puerile. Nevertheless these benevolent persons sometimes do much unintentional harm to the societies whom they endeavour to ameliorate. They fail of their object, and they create unreasonable aspirations which surely lead to discontent. Now discontent is a form of unhappiness.

In the present day many of these friends of humanity are at issue with nature and with the order of the world on the subject of the great inequalities which undoubtedly are to be found between different classes of mankind. They do not like these inequalities. They think it would be a much better arrangement if there were no very poor and no very rich; and, in fulfilment of their conception of what is right, they have decreed that the rich shall be relieved of their good things, and that the poor shall be made glad thereby. Now part

of their design, that of aiding the really poor and needy, is unquestionably well warranted. They are not only at liberty, but they would do well, to put their hands into their pockets and to relieve the poor to any extent that they can afford. But unfortunately their charity does not take exactly this direction. They would prefer to benefit the poor at the expense of others, and for their seizing what belongs to others they have no warrant whatever. Not only have they no warrant, but one does not see how their ideas can be carried into act at all except by producing anarchy and confusion everywhere; and a general social chaos would hardly tend to an equal and peaceable partition of this world's goods. Most of us would be glad if the condition of the very poor could be ameliorated; and many rich men make, as we believe, great and noble efforts in that direction with judgment and with good effect. But they are able to accomplish but little in proportion to the vast amount of want and suffering. They do not feel justified in forcibly taking from other men for the benefit of the poor, and so the amount of good done is but moderate.

The preaching of these doctrines about equality and the spoiling of the rich has, however, exercised a most deleterious influence on the minds of the ignorant and of those of low estate. It has raised in their minds a belief that a humble station is a positive wrong to him who fills it; and that the great duty and interest of all consists in rebelling against our condition if it is not of the highest, and in endeavouring to strip and impoverish all who are above ourselves.

We will not consider these levelling doctrines more at length,

but will remark, in reference to the subject of this paper, that such precepts as these philanthropists put abroad, cannot fail to vitiate the minds of the coal-miners and men of the same class, and to obscure their vision of things as they truly are. Men of higher training than miners may be most prejudicially thrown off their balance by being assured that their merits and rights entitle them to much better emoluments than they enjoy, and that what their richer neighbours possess is fraudulently taken from them. Human nature lends a ready ear to flattering tales of this kind. Therefore, if the coal-miners were by such specious misrepresentations prepared and excited against a time of conflict or dispute, we must not be surprised or shocked at their having gone so far as they did on the way to a crisis; we should rather admire them the more for the sensible conclusion of their trial in spite of the serious strain to which their judgment was subjected.

Where a strife has been much embittered, as this has been, it is certain that there will have been statements as well as reflections made public, which have not at all tended to a clear comprehension of its elements. Among other things it was affirmed that, independently of the present state of trade, pitmen's wages were so scandalously low that they ought, as a requirement of humanity, to be made more liberal, let the profit of the business be what it might. They were said to be paid as sparingly as agricultural labourers, which must mean that they get as little as any recognised class of workmen. Were this true, it would certainly be shocking to our sense of justice; because the circumstances amid which miners'

working lives are passed, and the dangers of their calling, certainly entitle them to wages much above those of the lowest class. This statement about the low wages, however, when it comes to be sifted, appears to be wholly misleading. From examination of the books of many collieries, the average daily wages of a collier shows as 6s. 2d. The men in some places state that a deduction of 8d. a-day ought to be made from this to cover the expenses of blasting powder and candles, which they have to provide out of their own means. Allowing this deduction, the wages stand at 5s 6d. per diem; and there are privileges and advantages enjoyed by the workmen which make their real earnings worth more than that. Five shillings and sixpence a day cannot be termed very low wages; and as a proof that they are not found to be so, it is stated that the men in general will not work more than five days a-week when they might work six.

We have put together this sketch of the dispute in the hope that it may be extensively read and reflected on by workmen, and in order that there may be on record some carefully collected memoranda to refer to when ruptures between masters and men may be again threatening. For, one lesson to be learned from the speeches and the literature of the disagreement is, that all these grounds of quarrel, real or supposed, are the better dealt with for being patiently looked into; and that most of them can be composed without an open fight, if both sides look to the true interests of business instead of to the apparent and momentary interests of classes. Another lesson which has become available through the disturbance of good

relations is, that many of England's chief industries are in a very critical condition,—so depressed, in fact, that a slight check may have the effect of permanently putting them down from their high estate, and of materially contracting their extent. The even partial decline of these industries would prove a most serious misfortune to the nation at large; but we may be certain that it would visit the working classes more severely than any other. Extensive pauperism and forced emigration are among the evils that threaten them. It is worth while to bear a great deal of present vexation rather than to bring about a collapse in business which cannot be amended once it may have been induced. One industry depends so on another, that when all are feeble, as they are now, a failure in one may bring down many.

England's true advantage requires that something of her old manufacturing and commercial superiority should be recovered. If that be possible, we may hear more satisfactory reports than we have lately been accustomed to regarding both profits and wages. The best chance of recovery lies in all hands striving diligently for the good of trade generally—keeping under internal strifes and envyings, and regarding with jealousy not those interested in the same business as themselves, but the acute foreigner, who is on the watch to take advantage of the errors which we may commit, and to step in and take away our markets and ruin our crafts. It is pure error to suppose that when trade is depressed wages can be forced up by agitation and the stoppage of work. Where is the money for raising wages to come from

under such circumstances? But if by the goodwill and hearty co-operation of all concerned our commerce can be made to hold its own, and perhaps to attain to increased ascendancy in the markets of the world, then the time will have come when, without strain or wrangling, but from the improved condition of things, the workmen may enjoy and establish an increased reward for their labour.

P.S.—Since the above notes were penned, a communication has been made by a Trades-Unionist to the 'Times,' and printed in its issue of January 7, on "The Critical Condition of the Coal-Trade." It sets forth, as might have been expected, the workman's view of the question; but as it is temperately worded, and as it would appear to express the feeling of some of the men, now that the controversy has passed its first heat, it may be profitable to consider some of its representations.

The main argument of the Unionist is that the wider adoption of the sliding scale of wages is greatly to be desired. In this opinion we entirely concur. The sliding scale, once it is arranged, is a safeguard against sudden strikes, and is very likely to prove (as it is the result of consultation and mutual concession) a means of obviating strikes altogether. We would, however, take this opportunity of noting that the arrangement of a sliding scale is something more than a matter of mere approval or will. It is as difficult in many instances as the arrangement of a satisfactory rate of wages; and unless both sides are disposed to be conciliatory, the one compromise can no more be effected than the other. We are glad, however, to see the proposal

come from this source; and we accept the recommendation as an earnest that unionists are prepared to approach the question of sliding scales in a liberal spirit. The sliding scale is in operation in Northumberland and Durham; and the relations between masters and men cannot be so different in Yorkshire and Lancashire but that similar understandings may be come to in these latter counties, if only the contracting parties be discreetly and moderately advised.

The writer whose observations we are considering is evidently of opinion that the statements of masters in the coal and in other trades are not to be implicitly relied on when they insist on the insufficiency of profits to allow of higher wages. This is to say in other words, that he is a partisan in the contest, and has not been convinced by the discussions which have taken place; for he begs the question as to nearly every point in dispute when he maintains that wages may reasonably now be raised. The proof of his position, if there is to be further contention, we must still wait for. It is, however, an admission of some importance that he thinks the demand of 15 per cent rise was too high, and that he would now be content to take 5 per cent—a great reduction of terms.

He affirms—and the statement reads like a very material one—that very many collieries have lately conceded a 10 per cent increase of wages. We are aware that an increase has been given in *some* collieries; but, as we believe, the cases have been few instead of many, and it has occurred in collieries which either are small, or *which did not concede the rise of 10 per cent in 1882, or the wages*

of which had been below the average of the district.

The announcement which gives rise to most regret in the Trades-Unionist's communication is that the men have deferred, but not abandoned, their intention of pressing, even to the hazard of a strike, for a greater or less rise, and that they are likely to take action about the 28th of January. Whether they have done so or not will be known by our day of publication. Judging from the manner in which the colliers acted in December, and from the grounds of their action, we have strong hope that they will

proceed to no extreme measure in the present critical state of their business—critical, we mean, not only as regards relations of masters and men, but the prospects of the coal-trade generally. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do bring on a crisis. As the Unionist puts the case, the men's tone, which was peremptory, has become moderate, and their demands, which were excessive, have been greatly lowered. This does not seem to indicate that the pitmen have got nearer to a resolution for desperate measures, but the contrary.

ARMY VIVISECTION.

OF recent years the army has been too much in the condition of an unfortunate dog bound down on the operating-table for successive Secretaries of State to try their surgery upon, and it now pathetically calls for rest from such vivisection. But the advocates of "progress," or rather it should be said of "change," are not satisfied. Because of a recent and temporary falling off in the supply of recruits, which, however, is now asserted to have been made up for, joined to the difficulties experienced in providing the yearly drafts for India, they have been proposing to subject our military system, which has never yet been fairly tried, to farther serious alterations that can only be regarded in the light of experiments.

The falling off in the supply of recruits was, as is now apparent, entirely due to an unwise meddling with the recruiting regulations; and the difficulty of supplying drafts for India is mainly due to a suicidal departure from the conditions on which our present organisation was founded. And common-sense and common prudence alike suggest a return to those conditions, so that our system may at least receive a fair trial before subjecting it to further changes that may only plunge us deeper in the mire.

In the November number of the Magazine for 1880, we indicated the particulars of the suicidal departure here referred to as follows: "The present system was based on the conditions that the battalions at home should be maintained at a certain *minimum* strength. The numbers were fixed both with a view to provide at an early

period an adequate reserve, without which short service is a mockery, and as the only means of maintaining in readiness for the small wars, in which England is so frequently involved, a certain number of battalions at high strength. Yet the number of men on which Lord Cardwell's scheme was based, and which was approved by Parliament, was voted for one year only. In the very next year the numbers were reduced by more than 7000 men by the very Government that had established the system; and since then, the numbers actually voted have made it inevitable that the battalions first for service have been composed nearly one-half of boys under eight months' service."

It seems hopeless that under a system of government by party England can ever possess an efficient army. Whenever a saving is to be effected on the yearly estimates, the hand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer falls heaviest on the army; and it must be allowed that fifteen and a half millions ought to be more than sufficient for the purpose if properly distributed. But, unfortunately, the saving is always effected in the wrong place, by striking off men, without an adequate supply of whom the machine can no more work profitably than can a steam-engine if it is denied a sufficiency of coal. The short-service organisation was commended to Parliament in 1871 by the promise that the Reserve would attain a specified large development in a given time. Yet, in 1872, by reducing largely the number of men out of whom the Reserve must be manufactured, the Government

rendered it impossible to fulfil the expectations they had raised. And thus, although Lord Cardwell was personally interested in keeping up the numbers on which the success of his scheme absolutely depended, he was unable to resist the pressure of his colleagues, urged on the ground that the political horizon was for the moment clear, and consented to a large reduction of men, that absolutely ruined his own handiwork. Lord Cardwell's own experiences ought to have warned him; for, in 1869, when he was War Minister, because the political horizon was without a cloud, the Government had summarily discharged 20,000 men from the army, whose places had to be supplied again in 1870, in the panic occasioned by the Franco-German war, and with all the disadvantages attendant on panic haste. The army is still suffering from the evil effects of that ill-advised reduction.

To appreciate properly the evil consequences of reducing the home battalions below the strength fixed by the conditions of our organisation, it should be understood that a home battalion, like a long-suffering transport mule, is weighted with heavier burthens than it can profitably carry even at its best. It suffers depletion every year from losses by death, by desertion, by purchased discharges, and by men passing to the Reserve; and it is, besides, obliged to supply the losses yearly sustained from the same causes by its twin battalion in India or the colonies. When, therefore, it is considered that the yearly draft for India required to be furnished by a home battalion numbering 450 men has frequently exceeded 300, it will be understood how it has happened that the low-strength battalions have been reduced to the state of

miserable inefficiency so justly complained of; and it will be apparent that their condition is in no way due to causes inherent in our system, but entirely to its flagrant maladministration by the politicals who rule in Pall Mall. It is worse than childish to expect a battalion 450 strong to supply all the demands above detailed and yet continue to bear the semblance of a military body.

In connection with this subject, it is an open secret that the present Adjutant-General, in an official minute, has declared it impossible to supply efficient drafts for battalions serving abroad without an addition of at least 8000 men to the infantry serving at home. But there is little hope of the necessary increase being given until the hands of Ministers are, as is usual with them, forced by events, when it may be too late. The leading principle of our present organisation is, that the number of soldiers at home must balance the number abroad, so that the casualties of the battalions abroad may be supplied by the battalions at home. Even with such equality of numbers, the object can only be accomplished at the cost of serious deterioration to the home battalions; and whenever the balance is disturbed, these cannot possibly do the work required of them without a *pro tanto* increase of their rank and file. Yet, owing to the demands of Egypt, 66 battalions at home have for a long time past been called upon to supply 75 battalions abroad without one additional man being allowed to the number of the former. The consequence is, that although it were now decided to raise the home battalions to the strength that should have been given to them eighteen months ago, the recruits raised for that purpose

would not be available as soldiers, and could not be sent abroad under a year; whereas, if that measure had been adopted at the proper time, the recruits then raised would be available now.

The political atmosphere seems overcharged with electricity, and all men, excepting those who habitually dwell above the clouds, must feel that the army is just now *the* one of our national institutions that it most behoves us to have in perfect condition for use at any moment. But our Ministers are deaf to warnings; and after all, the military dilemma is only one of many that have their origin in government by a popular assembly, to which would appear to be applicable the reverse of Macaulay's description of the times of ancient Rome, when

"None was for a party,"

but

"All were for the State,"

and under which English Cabinets, in recent times, have been accustomed to place the numbers in a "division" above the real interests of the country.

The impossibility of supplying the large drafts required by India from the attenuated home battalions, was referred to in a leading article in the 'Times' on the 13th November last. The writer, in order to avoid the necessity of "a substantial increase of the home battalions, and consequently of the estimates," propounds an alternative remedy that would be worse than the disease. For whereas all recruits (excepting in the Guards) are now enlisted for seven years with the colours and five in the Reserve, the 'Times' would invite a recruit to engage for fifteen years in all in place of twelve, giving him the option of serving either for three years with the colours and

twelve in the Reserve, or for twelve with the colours and three in the Reserve.

Now, apart from the unlikelihood that any number of men would be found to give fifteen years of their lives to military service in any shape without a certainty of pension, it may be expected from past experience that at least four-fifths of the recruits would declare for the shorter period of colour service. Before these could be sent to India they must all be induced to extend their service in the ranks from three years to twelve; and however sanguine the expectation that a sufficiency of men to provide the Indian reliefs would be so obtained, such a plan would depend for its success altogether on contingencies, and would be very far from possessing the certainty that ought to characterise the working of a military machine. And if, as all experience would seem to indicate, the men could not be induced to extend their service—what then?

What the army now wants above all things is a little breathing-time, and that reformers should be content to wait the development of our present system, under fair conditions of trial, before indulging in new experiments. And this prudent reticence is enforced by the fact, that the first and most revolutionary step in "army reform" has unquestionably been disappointing in its results.

Among the advantages promised by those who carried the abolition of purchase, was one, and that not the least prominent, that it would ensure the army being officered by a body of "professional officers," who, on account of their love of the service, would be content to pass their lives in it. Speaking in the House of Peers in 1870, Lord Northbrook stated that, un-

der the system of "purchase," it was impossible to secure what he called a professional body of officers, because so many of all ranks yearly left the army by sale, that "however anxious officers might be to acquire a knowledge of their profession, it was utterly impossible the majority could do so while these rapid changes went on." Yet in spite of the promises of the promoters of the measure, thirteen years after the abolition of purchase, officers are so little in love with the army, that they are voluntarily leaving it in crowds,—large numbers thinking only of "making their book," that is, of obtaining the best terms of retirement at the earliest possible time. The average number of years that officers now remain in the army from choice is smaller than under the purchase system; while, on the other hand, many who would gladly have made the army a life profession, are now compelled to leave it before attaining their prime.

Another deplorable result of the abolition of purchase, is the new doctrine of "selection," which, if pushed in practice to the lengths advocated by certain votaries of progress, and foreshadowed by recent instances, would, we predict, utterly destroy the confidence of officers in the justice of those authorities on whom their future prospects would depend. In discussing the question, it would be convenient to obtain a clear definition of what is meant by "selection." The demand urged by the *doctrinaires* is, that "competent men, and not merely senior men, should occupy responsible positions in the army as they do in other public callings." To a proposition so stated, no objection can be taken; but if the real meaning be that the *best* men should be sought

out and promoted to vacancies as they arise, it simply covers a dangerous delusion. According to such a meaning, whenever an infantry majority might become vacant, the "selector" would be bound to seek out the best man from among the 1500 full-pay captains; for a vacant majority in the artillery, the choice would lie among the 340 captains; for a vacant lieutenant-colonelcy of infantry, including the Guards, the best man would have to be found among the 300 full-pay majors,—and so on.

If it should be said that it is not intended to discriminate between approximate shades of merit, it follows that this theoretical "selection" would resolve itself into a system of "modified seniority;" otherwise, unless the selector be infallible, he must make many mistakes, where every mistake would be a sweeping injustice. Indeed, considering the fallibility of human judgment, as well as taking into account other influences, it may be questioned if the chances of justice would be much greater under a system of promotion by lot. At all events, officers would be likely to feel as much confidence in the one as in the other. "Other public callings" afford scope for the display of superior professional ability at all times, and merit earns advancement by a process of natural selection. In the struggle for existence the strongest rise to the top. It is true that war provides the ambitious soldier with means of distinction affording fair and fitting ground for discrimination. But during peace, under the system here supposed, advancement would depend on an artificial and wholly untrustworthy selection, because the dead level of peace affords no opportunities for the display of

such differences in the special and rarer qualities valuable in the man of action that could alone justify a disturbance of the seniority rule in army promotion. In the German army promotion by seniority is a rule absolute. The tests of efficiency are rigidly applied. Where these are satisfied promotion is given as a right; and an officer, first of his grade, who is unfit to be promoted, is judged unfit to remain in the German army. In our army certain proofs of efficiency are exacted as *qualifying for promotion*; it would be solely due to incapacity in the administration if these tests were not satisfied; and there could be no justification for superseding in peace time an officer first of his grade, who, having been always favourably reported on, had besides satisfied the prescribed tests for promotion to higher rank.

We have lately heard much of the evils of interfering with *esprit de corps*; but such interference could hardly take a more objectionable form than the filling of every vacant majority and lieutenant-colonelcy in any regiment by a stranger from a different corps, who might easily be inferior to some of those whom he would supersede, and who, if not really inferior, would infallibly be thought so.

The above may appear an exaggerated, and it is doubtless a very absurd, picture of the working of a system of selection; but if it does not mean this, it can only mean the adoption of the German system—the only fair and reasonable one—of pure seniority, modified by the rigid exercise of the veto against the promotion of officers whose incompetence has been clearly established. If this veto had been rigidly exercised in the

past, “selection” never would have been heard of in our army,—a system which Anthony Trollope, speaking from his experience of its administration in the Post-office department, calls “the damnable system of so-called merit”; and we should have been spared the scandal of seeing the recent supersession of a regimental lieutenant-colonel by a junior officer from a different corps.

Whenever an officer is superseded, it ought to be for some cause clearly disqualifying him for the higher rank; and a system that should pretend to detect such minute differences of merit as to promote one officer over the head of another because he is supposed to be a shade better, and which yet, a little later, should allow of the promotion of the superseded officer, would be simply “reform” run mad—utterly indefensible on any ground of reason, justice, or public policy—and would simply open the door to the worst form of favouritism. No man, or association of men, could safely be trusted with the administration of such a system, and under it no officer could feel secure of obtaining just treatment.

Selection by merit is only one of the many unpractical *nostrums* which the *doctrinaires* are bent on forcing on the country. “Living up in a balloon,” or “in the planet Saturn,”—these are the men who have meddled and muddled in Ireland, in South Africa, in India, and in Egypt; who have wasted the time of Parliament in childish censures on the Lords, in inoperative rules of procedure, in trying to force on the House of Commons Mr Bradlaugh, and on the country the ridiculous pretensions of M. de Lesseps. Everything of any importance they have attempted has resulted in disas-

trous or ludicrous failure, excepting only the military expedition to Egypt; and now they are bent on applying their ruinous *nostrums* to the army which, gaining for them their one success, procured for them at the same time a renewal of the lease of their power for mischief.

The question recently asked at Oldham by Mr H. Gladstone—"What had the Tories done to justify a change of Government?"—should rather have been, What have the Liberals not done to justify that change? If a servant

shows himself incorrigible in respect of setting fire to his master's curtains, destroying his linen, smashing his valuable china, making away with other people's property, and generally wasting his time in "blether," instead of attending to the diligent performance of his duties, his master does not inquire what others have done to justify a change of servants, but incontinently turns off the delinquent and replaces him by the best available substitute. Let us hope that John Bull may go and do likewise.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXXI.

MARCH 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

A LADY'S RIDE ACROSS SPANISH HONDURAS.—PART III.

"ESTOY SOLTERA ; VOY CON DIOS" (I am alone ; I go with God).—*Spanish Axiom.*

CHAPTER VII.

WEARY and wayworn on the outskirts of Goascaron, and depressed by my misadventures with the baggage-mule, I was right glad to hear the voice of the doctor calling out, "Is that the lady from Aceituna?"

"Señor, si," responded Abel on my behalf ; "and a very weary day the lady has had. I will tell you about it presently. Come, Eduardo, hold the mare whilst I lift her from the saddle."

The Italian doctor, however, anticipated the attention ; and somehow (for the power of assisting myself had left me) I was seated in a rocking-chair, and a short man with finely cut features was looking steadily in my face.

"You are faint from over-fatigue," he said ; "there is nothing more the matter. You want a little cognac."

He went to fetch this, and I was soon revived by swallowing a

portion of the stimulant. But I was aching with a dull pain from head to foot, and it was with difficulty that I could speak. It was as from a long distance off that I heard Abel recapitulating all our misfortunes,—small enough, perhaps, in the temperate zone, but with the sun at 102° in the shade, *otra cosa* (another thing), as the Spaniards say.

"You should have rested in the middle of the day," the doctor added decisively. "It was a shameful thing to send an unbroken animal ; and—you don't mean to tell me that you are going to take the cattle back to-night?"

"Such are my orders," replied Abel.

"But the lady has hired them, and I suppose has paid for them, to take her as far as Arimesine?"

"She has, Señor ; but, you see, she has not got there. I am ready

to go on now, but I think it will be too far for the lady. I am very sorry. What can I do?"

The doctor pondered a moment. "You had better return: stay, and refresh for a couple of hours. There is a good moon too. I can provide mules here to carry the lady on. Better that she should lose a little than get ill. By the way," continued the doctor quickly, "was this lady told that she had hired animals by time, or did she understand that you were to return with them to-night under any circumstances?"

"She says, Señor, that she understood that the mules were at her disposal until she should arrive at Arimesine."

"Ah, well, I am glad it is a Briton, and not any one of this country, who could behave so badly to a woman, and to one travelling alone too."

"Trust the British for cheating and swindling one another whenever they can get the chance in an out-of-the-way country; mind I say in an out-of-the-way country," shouted a voice, which was undoubtedly an English one, though employing the Spanish language with more force than accuracy.

"I wonder who on earth this can be!" thought I to myself, as the speaker went on to question Abel with more or less bad Spanish, garnished with a round British oath here and there. It was not long before the mystery was solved; for a large, red-faced, choleric-looking man, with a merry twinkle in his eye, stood before me. He looked what he eventually turned out to be—a retired captain in the British merchant service.

"I beg your pardon, madam," he said; "but I heard that travellers had come in, and one of them an English lady. I am sorry you have had such a day of it—very sorry. Now if you would like to

go on with the animals in a few hours, I will take precious good care they don't return to Aceituna till you have done with them. I am a match for Abel, though he is a big fellow."

"Oh no, thank you," I replied hastily; "Abel has been so good, so attentive to me, I would much rather not go on. In fact, I am so tired that I am thankful to rest here."

"All right, then; but if I were you, I would write to Consul Bahl, who is an honest man, and tell him how this precious custom-house officer has behaved. Bah! what makes England send all her rubbish out here?"

"Not all, surely," I replied—"there must be many exceptions."

"Just you look at that Honduras railway, madam," he went on. "That railway was planned and carried out by a parcel of fellows sitting in their offices in London. The prospectuses they issued were all deceptive; people were deluded into investing their money and taking shares in it; a great crash came, and many of the best people here were utterly ruined. Some of these fellows, I know, subscribed to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and others for the Conversion of the Jews. Bah! yah, yah! bosh!"

The doctor intervened. He remarked that the captain had lost greatly in this Honduras railway himself, and the very mention of the subject made him nearly *bola*.

"*Bola*; what does that mean?" I inquire.

"Drunk. He is morally so now; and perhaps," added my new friend, "he may be a little so physically: it is his weak point."

A very pretty Indian girl, with sweet eyes and a timid manner, now came forward. She said, "We cannot make you very com-

fortable to-night, Señora, but to-morrow it will be better. Don Graciano says you must stay over to-morrow."

I went with her into the house, and there, partitioned off, in a corner of the long low store, was a comfortable bed, screened from the public view by some clever arrangement of blankets and coverlets. Eduardo, by desire of the host, had put in some toilet-ware. This was a great comfort; for the Hondureians, as a rule, are quite independent of this necessity of life: indeed, in the interior of the country, to possess even the meanest article of crockery, is to be accredited with more than the usual means of supporting life. Thus, in the opinion of many, Don Graciano would be accounted a well-to-do (*hombre de bien*), if not a rich man.

Abel came to take leave of me before I retired, and it was with real regret that I parted with this honest, kindly guide. I pressed a little remembrance into his hand, and thanked him sincerely for the help he had given me.

"I shall keep this for my next little daughter," the stalwart fellow answered. "I will put it round her neck, and call her *Inglesa*. Adios."

The tramp of the mare and the mules told us that Abel was on the way back to his gracious master; and so we all turned to our beloved sleep. It was strange on the next morning, in looking through the blankets, to find myself lying in bed in a general store. Yes; there were the shelves laden with jars of pickles, bottles of wine, tea-canisters, and kerosene-lamps. Other shelves held a variety of articles, all suited to the requirements of country life; and a compartment was entirely fitted up with drugs and medicine-bottles, supported at one end by a pestle

and mortar, and at the other by a large glass machine, which in shape was a cut between a hot-water bottle and a pillar post-box. A curling projection, also of glass, rendered this article a subject of my earnest scrutiny. A small chair in the angle of this compartment, and a tiny table before it, seemed to announce that this was the professional part of the establishment.

A knock from somewhere brought me to my manners; and I had just time to close the loophole in the curtains when I heard a voice from somewhere follow the knock from somewhere.

"Excuse me, Señora," called my host, "but you had better rise now. We open very early in these parts, and people may be coming into the store earlier than you may like. Are you better?"

"Much, thank you," I called out in response, "but still very tired, and my bones ache."

"I have prepared some medicine for you to take later in the day. Your *mozo* will bring some water." Almost immediately a large red pitcher, of the form they used long years ago in old Egypt, was poked under the blanket, and I quickly proceeded to avail myself of this, to me, the greatest comfort in life—viz., cold-water ablution.

I got dressed in time to avoid coming in contact with some men who had entered by the large oak door of the store; they were all talking "mule," and were smoking like limekilns.

The doctor had been hovering about somewhere, and finding me ready, took me, *sans ceremonie*, into an inner apartment. There, on an iron bedstead completely covered by a mosquito-net, lay the young girl I had seen the night before, fast asleep, with a naked brown baby of about three months old lying on her bosom. Don Graciano, with a smile which singularly soft-

ened his hard well-cut features, put his hand beneath the curtain and brought out the little creature, which he hugged with the fondest pride. "My little daughter—my first-born," said he. "Look, Señora, she is plump and very clean. I follow the English fashion, and my little one has her bath night and morning. Is it not so, my pearl?"

"My pearl," who was as brown as a berry, danced and kicked and looked great things. This infant had certainly much "speculation in its eyes;" and its dark nature's costume never seemed to make me aware that this little specimen of humanity was entirely "in the nude."

Passing through this room I was conducted to the back verandah; here were tables and chairs, and some coffee-cups put out in array, apparently for immediate use. In an incredibly small space of time the mother of the infant was at my side: she seemed to be washed and dressed by a feat of legerdemain. She called a *mozo*, who was evidently in the service of the house, and handed the child to him, speeding her way with great alacrity into the *cocina* (kitchen).

The *cocinas* are always built apart from the dwelling-house in these countries; they are composed principally of the baked mud called *adobe*. The *batterie de cuisine* is not extensive, the chief utensils being, usually, a small furnace, a portable grate, a stone for rolling and baking *tortillas*, a plate or two, and a coffee-pot. The smoke may escape from the hole in the roof, or it may gush out at the door, just as it happens: nobody cares for such a trifle as this.

Don Graciano came out on this verandah. "We shall have coffee directly," he said; "but the regular breakfast is a little before mid-day. *Mozo*, place the chairs." And he took the infant as he spoke.

Some delicious coffee and maize-cakes were brought, and we sat down to the table. I hesitated a moment, and then said, "Should we not wait for the Señora?"

"Oh no," replied the husband; "she is busy in the kitchen; she does not take her meals with me. Now I want to tell you I think I can get mules and a muleteer for you: I have been speaking to Eduardo. Not a bad lad, but he is idle; mind you keep him to his work, and make him wait upon you. Well, as I was saying, there are some very good muleteers in Goascaron just now, and I can recommend one especially. He is a good walker, and a first-rate man in his way. Will you allow me to see him for you?"

I reply gratefully, "Yes, by all means."

"Possibly I may be able to manage for you. Marcos is not cheap, but his mules are thoroughly good; and as you have some awkward rivers to ford, his strength and his knowledge you will find valuable. *Mozo—mo—zo!*"

"Estoy aqui, Señor" (I am here, sir), gasped the little lad, as he emerged from the *cocina* with his mouth crammed with *tortilla*, and his hands full of some mess of cake and honey.

He was ordered, as I gathered, to summon Marcos somebody, and Vicente somebody else, and above all the "Sir," and to be quick about it. The rapidity of the Italian must have been like an electric shock to the semi-Hondurean, semi-Spanish lad; but he was evidently accustomed to it.

Eduardo had a lazy, lounging, happy-go-lucky way of going about his business, which made him appear to be more indolent than he really was. The doctor fell upon him as he observed him lounging beyond the verandah,—“Have you

looked after the lady's baggage?" said he.

"I have received no orders," replied the *mozo*. "What am I to do, Señora"—with a slight emphasis on the Señora.

I looked at Don Graciano, who remarked, "Your tin box is very dirty, and the rest of the baggage looks as if it had been rolled in clay. It is in the stable; and you," added he, turning to Eduardo, "had better go and clean it; you have nothing to do."

The youth bowed himself out of the way with the usual placid composure of the Spanish race. "Ah," said Don Graciano, with an air of disgust, "these fellows won't hurry themselves for anything under the sun: this is one of the true breed. Now mind, Señora, mind you make him stick to his work."

Don Graciano here left me, being inquired for from outside; and presently I heard his voice in full swing—short, decisive, and incisive—taking the lead amongst several others, whose numbers seemed to increase as the minutes passed on.

"No; once more no, Enrico," said my host; "you will not do. Your animals are bad, and you are idle in starting. The Señora must not take you. Ah, here is El 'Sir.' What do you say, 'Sir'; do you advise this man to travel with your countrywoman?"

A rampaging and snorting, together with the answer, instructed me that the individual addressed as El "Sir" was no other than the English captain.

"My goodness, gracious, patience, no!" responded El "Sir." "There is only one of these fellows fit for this kind of journey; that is Marcos. Where is she?"

The "she" was supposed to indicate me; and Don Graciano came out, and brought me into

the little coign of vantage which served as the consulting-room.

The present business being "mule," the company were convened at the lower end of the store. There were some respectable-looking men among these; they had evidently been summoned to hold this *convenio*, and I felt sure that the Italian doctor would do his very best for me. Somehow I relied more upon him than upon El "Sir," although the latter was an Englishman.

"May I go beyond the price you mentioned last night?" asked the doctor, in a low tone. "Marcos is here: he demands more than any other muleteer, but his mules are far superior to those of the others, I think."

I thought the matter over, and gave the doctor full authority to arrange as was best. "Remember," I added, "that money is an object to me."

By this time the man alluded to as Marcos had entered the store, and seated himself on the low counter in a free-and-easy manner. The rest stood round, and, with *cigarillos* in their mouths, talked and bargained and gesticulated in a manner which would not have disgraced a market-place in Paris. Here and there a man would make some reference to "la Señora"; and one fine fellow made a short run at me, in order to impress upon my mind that El "Sir" knew nothing about the business, and, in fact, would be very much better in the sea.

The Hondureians, I observed, consign their obnoxious or troublesome acquaintances to El Mar (the sea), very much as we consign our own "objectionables" to Jericho or to Hong Kong.

About half an hour passed in this way: no actual business was done, and some of the men left, promising to come back and resume the subject later in the day. "The

Señora does not set out till to-morrow morning," one of them said.

"And not then, if she is not quite rested and well," said the kindly host.

One by one the muleteers left, talking outside upon the subject of my journey.

Marcos then sprang off the counter and came towards me. Taking my hand, he brought me to the principal door of the store. "Señora," said he, "look at that mule; she is a noble mule. Luisa will carry you till she drops. So gentle, too," the man continued, as he stroked her head. "La querida!" (The dear one.)

She was a handsome beast, mouse-coloured, with black ears and large intelligent eyes. I really admired her, and delighted Marcos by repeating after him, "La querida."

"You will take me?" said the man. "I am half Indian, and the Indian always has the fine ear and the rapid tread. I can write too, and I can read," added he. "A good priest held an Indian school. Some of them are bad here, Señora, but this one, O Señora! he was good to the Indian race."

"I will speak to Don Graciano. He thinks, however, that you ask too much."

"Then, Señora, I will put it like this. You shall pay me the sum I shall agree on, and you can ride at leisure; no hurry. I will bide your time; and if you like to go quick one day and slow the other, all the same to me. I should like to go with you."

"Will you be careful in crossing the rivers, and assist me in the difficulty of passing the rough places? I am afraid you may be impatient with me, Marcos, for I am not a bold rider."

"By the dear Christ that died for us," said the man, making the

sign of the cross, "I will serve you faithfully and well."

I felt that he was sincere; and so, on going into the house, I requested the Don to draw up the necessary agreement.

"Now take this draught I have prepared for you," said this active man, who never seemed to forget anything or anybody. "Rest a little now, and after that I hope you will accompany me to the bull-chase."

"What! a bull-fight?" said I, in astonishment.

"I said a bull-*chase*, Señora; quite a different thing."

"What is the difference?"

"It is the custom here annually to allot three young bulls to the hamlet, in order to improve or raise the farm stock. On a certain day the bulls are let out of the corral, and the young men of the parish chase them, the bulls having a fair start.

"The animal, when caught, is brought into an enclosed space, garlanded with ribbons, and adjudged publicly to the victor. It is a pretty sight; for, whilst the chase is going on, the other men dance with the girls to the sound of a very fair brass band. I want you to see how well we can conduct our *fiestas* among the mountains."

This *fiesta* was the cause of the presence of so many muleteers in Goascaron: they were to take part in the dance, but none of them, I think, entered for the chase.

Late in the afternoon the doctor, in gala costume, knocked at my enclosure, and was ready to escort me to the meadow where the dance was to be held.

"Where is the Señora?" asked I.

"She is not coming. She must remain and attend to the infant. Our female servant is to go to the

general ball in the evening, and all the *mozos* are gone to see the chase."

The sound of a clarionet and horn playing a lively measure announced that we were near the scene of amusement; a rushing noise, and voices shouting from afar, proclaimed that *el toro negro* (the black bull) had been loosed, and was far away, flying up the hill, with a score or more of young men provided with lassoes tearing at full speed on mule-back after him.

The first dance was the graceful *ronda* of the muleteers.

This is called *ronda*, because the dancers are surrounded by their mules, which are all decked with their gayest trappings; some of these bearing panniers, sometimes filled with flowers, sometimes filled with babies. These last generally accompanied the band vocally, and *ad nauseam*.

It was very interesting to watch the evolutions of this graceful dance, and the unerring precision with which the men and women mazed between the quadrupeds, waltzed back, formed a ring in the centre, and finished all by the head muleteer raising his *machete*, as he stood alone in the centre of the ring and shouted, "Evviva, la ronda de los mulateros!" (long live the muleteers' dance!) After that there was some very good waltzing, the step being accurately turned, although the men wore their mountain boots, which are heavy. The dance was held under two immense trees, just in the hollow formed between two slopes; but still the heat was great, and I wondered how they could work away as persistently as they did.

The women and girls wore the white mantilla, in honour of the day, short white dresses decked with some bright embroidery worked in the material, and all wore flow-

ers. The elder women and *chaperons* were dressed usually in dark raiment, with the graceful black mantilla thrown over the head. I grieve to say that this elegant article of dress is giving place to a style of horrid little hat, which a French commercial traveller, some two years ago, had introduced into the country. A young stumpy girl, arrayed in one of these, I saw pegging away with a *mozo* of Don Graciano's; and as she appeared to have put everything she possessed in the way of ribbon and flowers upon the said hat, I earnestly hoped that the awful spectacle she presented would alarm the beholders into declaring for the mantilla for ever.

Shouts and huzzas and a rush of the dancers to an enclosed space, announced the capture of the black bull. He had run well, it was said, and therefore all the more merit for the captor; and so they both received a wonderful ovation. As the stranger, I was requested to place the red cord, which is usually thrown round the bull's neck after the chase, into the hand of the victor. As I did so, some one in authority proclaimed that this *toro* had been fairly chased and lassoed by Trasquito Gómez, and was now his lawful prize. Did any one deny it? No; and so Trasquito and the *toro* went off to their dwelling-place. Another bull was let out of the corral, and given seven minutes' start. The young men and the mules and the lassoes were hard at work, and the dancers and the band returned to the great chestnut-trees.

I was getting tired, so after drinking a glass of mountain wine to the health of Goascaron, Don Graciano conducted me back to his home. On the way he told me that he had made a fair arrangement with the muleteer Marcos,

as to my journey. "He is as wild as a hawk," said Don Graciano, "and will have the uttermost farthing; nevertheless, take him, for he is a splendid muleteer, and his beasts are first-rate."

The Indian girl with her baby—this time covered by the white linen scarf which depended from the mother's head—opened the door. She told me there was to be a dance on a large scale in the evening, for the *gente ordinario* (common people), and that Marcos and Eduardo would both be there.

"You will not start very early, then," said Don Graciano with a smile.

At break of day I was out, as I wanted to look at the scene of the dance and the chase, but to my disappointment a heavy mist hid all from sight. I had not been in the village church, so I wended my steps to it, and pushing the door open, I walked in. Small and poorly furnished; but kneeling before the little altar were two or three worshippers gathered together. That half-hour was sacred to them and to me.

The mist by this time had entirely cleared away, and now, behold the sky! a sea of opal light, upon which floated minute masses of soft pink colour. One of the largest of these rested for a time upon the summit of one of the lower mountain-peaks, as if a rose had fallen thereon and waited to be kissed.

A few moments later and the whole of the rosy tufts had faded away like a shower of leaves, and a blue-green light shimmered in their wake, the herald of the sun.

He rose at once in the full glory of his strength, enveloping cloud and colour in his golden robe; flushing high mountain and lowly cañon with his regal tints, and upon all things making his presence

to be felt. I wondered not, at the moment, at the devotion of the ancient Persian, nor at that of the Indian, whose morning "prime" was the worship of "El Sol."

My own (weak woman's) tribute was a gush of tears. It could not be restrained, all was so beautiful and so grand; and Nature seemed to greet, with a mother's love, one who was alone in the world!

A hot day was imminent! The prearranged hour of starting was already long past, for I had wished to be in the saddle before the air became as heated as white steel. The axiom that time was made for slaves, is very rigidly enforced by example in these regions; and nobody ever is or can be punctual to an exact or specified hour. Forty minutes' "law" is by no means considered to be a liberal allowance.

Doubtless the ball of the previous evening had been late, and both Marcos and Eduardo might be sleeping the sleep of the "danced out." I remember, too, that I have been young myself, and how often a servant has had to wait up for me and mine till we should return from a friendly "hop" or a county ball. Poor fellows! they have a hard life, and a dance to them only comes once or twice a-year. Let them sleep on.

Thus musing, I refrained from tapping on the wooden shutter, beneath which Marcos was stretched on a bench, prone and motionless.

Presently there arose sounds of hurry-scurry in the little piazza in front of Don Graciano's house,—a stamping of mules, added to the chatter of some four or five women who were full of gossip, probably about the preceding day's *fiesta*.

Opening the shutter full wide, and looking through the iron bars which did duty for a window, I saw that the muleteer had risen, scared awake, no doubt, by the

women's tongues. Nobody had aroused him intentionally, for the Spaniards and most others allied to them by blood have a particular objection to awakening a sleeper. The most important business can and must wait: El Señor is asleep, and cannot be disturbed. No matter whether the slumber be in regular course; whether of fatigue and exhaustion, or merely the temporary *siesta* induced by heat and languor, or—idleness. "*Se duerme*" is conclusive: leave the sleeper in peace, till Nature in her own time shall unclothe his eyes.

There was plenty to attend to; for to load a baggage-mule requires some skill and great care. Much suffering is often caused to animals through carelessness in this respect. It was very interesting to watch the proceedings of Marcos. How carefully he arranged the cloths which are first placed on the animal's back, before the luggage is strapped on, and how cleverly he weighted every article, in order to give the burden an equal poise! Eduardo assisted in this, and Don Graciano looked attentively to the saddling of the mule that was to carry me.

"I will now go and take leave of the Señora," I said, and betook myself to the back verandah. The girl had her little naked baby on her arm; I took it from her, and kissing it, said, "You will have so much pleasure in rearing this little one; and from what Don Graciano has told me, you must be in the way of making a nice fortune for her before many years have passed over your heads."

"Perhaps so," she answered, her quiet equable tones being somewhat broken, as I patted her naked shoulder and pressed her hand, to thank her for her hospitality. "I shall never forget you," she went on to say—"never. The sound of

your voice, Señora, falls like the drop of cold water when one dies of thirst."

This elegant compliment, expressed so simply in the loveliest language in the world, touched me much more than it flattered me. It was the outcome of woman's sympathy with woman. I had taken her hand with marked respect, and treated her as the mistress of the house; and the avowal of my indebtedness, addressed to herself directly, seemed to give her the utmost satisfaction. "*Va con Dios*," she said, after a short pause, and turned into the *cocina*, evidently not venturing to accompany me to the front court. A thought flashed into my mind like lightning; I wonder it had not occurred to me before. This must be the case. Don Graciano is evidently a man of superior station and education, and a pure white; the girl is as unmistakably of Indian blood. Here is an example of following out "*el costumbre del país*"! (the custom of the country.)

Whether my conjectures were ill-founded or not (and I only based them on the state of subjection in which this young woman seemed to live), I had no time for speculation, as the object of my rumination was waiting, hat in hand, to assist me to mount. To lift a lady guest into the saddle, and to walk at the head of the mule and conduct it and its burden some way into the open, is one of the duties of hospitality in these far-off hamlets. It is a remnant of the courtesy of the ancient races: the lowest as well as the highest all rigidly observe this custom.

The last arrangements for departure were soon made, and I, a timid rider, felt that Luisa the mule, and myself, would travel amicably together. Gentle, hand-

some beast! It says well of her that she carried me nearly one hundred and sixty miles without hap or hazard.

This happy result, on my part, was more of good luck than of good guidance.

The *macho* was a little tiresome to start, and he danced about vigorously, with Eduardo on his back. It then transpired that he was a young, high-couraged animal, and that Marcos was taking him this long journey in order to tame him and complete his education. It came out afterwards that Marcos intended to sell him on the return journey, and would no doubt be able to do so at a high price. I was glad to hear this, as it secured good treatment to the animals; not that I think Marcos was naturally cruel, but he was a hard man, and I do not do him injustice in saying, that to make money by the service of his mules was his first and paramount consideration.

"Marcos is a good muleteer,"

said Don Graciano, in allusion to him in our parting words, "but he dearly loves money. Mind every thing is included in his contract with you; and be sure you do not give him a *cuarto* to pay for forage or stabling of the mules in the places you may have to stay in. He will try this, probably; but be sure there is generally plenty of grass and water, and the animals are always better when they feed out at night."

Marcos and Eduardo then came up, and received from me a *peseta* each for their daily expenses; and it was agreed I should dispense this sum to them every morning on starting, and thus save difficulty in the accounts. We were now fairly on our way to the mountains, and, in a few words more, Don Graciano gave me "God-speed."

"Marcos will bring me word of you when he returns home with the mules," he said lastly. This hospitable stranger now bent his way to his dwelling-place, and I felt as if I had left a friend.

CHAPTER VIII.

We travelled a few miles in silence, for the men were evidently languid from the want of sleep, and I was too much engrossed by the beauty of the scenery, and in admiration of the glorious country through which we were passing, to need conversation. Luisa, the mule, carried me well, and her even pace left me at liberty to enjoy the sweet air of these magnificent Hondureian mountains, so little known to the outside world, and so little appreciated by those who dwell around them.

Here, rock, wood, tree, shrub, and water are on a grand scale—all, so to speak, the best of their kind; and the humble wild flowers,

adorning the far-stretching fertile valleys which slope between the clefts, are rich in colour, and far from wanting in perfume. The varying lights—the glimmering opal and the deep purple haze alternating with the fairest blue of the heaven and the blackest depth of the cloud—as we passed on our way, presented a scene, the like of which I never had seen before, and never expect to see again.

I may write, perhaps, with some partiality; for what the sea is to many, the mountains are to me. I was born amongst them, in the grand Pyrenees, and so I am their daughter. When sickness of body

and sorrow of heart fall upon me, I will arise and flee to the mountains. My strength surely comes from them.

We ascended higher, and in the elastic air the men became refreshed, and as hunger and noon-day approached, we agreed to halt. There was a *hacienda* picturesquely built in a cleft of the ranges. To this we wended our way, and were glad to see the chestnut-trees stretching grandly in front of this demesne. Here was shelter for the animals, for the grass and shade were deep all around; and we human beings could sling a hammock on the lowest branches of the fine trees.

The baggage-mule was disencumbered of my hammock and the little bag of provisions only.

"We have only a short time," said Marcos; "and as it is her first day's journey, she will not be distressed if she is not unladen until night."

Soon after, the lady of the *hacienda* came out. "My servants saw you camping," she said with a charming smile. "We have illness in the house, and so my cousin and I have come to pay our compliments here. I regret that I cannot ask you under my roof."

The young lady alluded to as "my cousin" was a most lovely daughter of old Spain, about fifteen years of age. She said little, but seemed interested to meet, for the first time in her life (it appeared), an English lady, travelling through Spanish Honduras.

This simple courteous welcome quite relieved me; for I confess I had felt somewhat abashed at walking, literally with bag and baggage, into a stranger's territory, and using it as if it were an inn.

"I will send you some milk and

coffee," the lady said; "and after that, I would recommend you to take a *siesta*. You seem to have good guides and animals. Ah, you want them in these parts! Adios."

The milk and coffee, so liberally promised, came by the hand of a *mozo* of the place. He told us that his mistress possessed large herds of cattle; indeed, as far as eye could range, the fields and slopes were dotted thickly with kine. Then after helping me into the hammock, this *mozo* laid himself down between my two companions, and the whole three of them slept soundly, with only the fallen timber for a pillow. I, in my more elevated position, simply rested, and bestowed a benison upon the soul who first invented the hammock.

Exactly as two hours had passed, Marcos was on his feet. A muleteer is warranted to awake at any moment, and so he almost always does. It is the only action of punctuality in the whole republic.

The *mozo* gave us a helping hand, and we started at a good round pace for Arimesine. It was nearly dark when we rode up to the principal house in this place. The village was merely a broken square of thatched and yellow-washed hovels; the principal one was *posada*, general store, and forage "emporium" combined. Nothing of interest here, as my journal runs:—

"Reached Arimesine at seven. Passed a fairly good night, as the woman of the house possessed some notions of propriety. Quite in clover, for I had a railed-off space, wherein to hang my hammock, divided from the public room by my travelling rug and a shawl hung on a high clothes-horse. The men slept in the verandah. There was a white basin in the establishment, and Eduardo got this filled

with water, and in a manner I managed to wash."

We were on our way very early the next morning, and travelled at a good pace. The country had become a little more broken, and foliage in great luxuriance was beginning to disappear. Marcos gathered me some bunches of the quinine tree, which is a graceful shrub in all its stages. The flower is white, and is in shape a cross between the pentstemon of our gardens and the stephanotis. The latter lovely parasite we saw at various intervals in great profusion. The peculiarity in the growth of the stephanotis is that it requires a background of some other climber to support it, and at the same time give it a slight protection from the sun. Thus aided, the plant will reach to an immense height, and I have seen it winding round the trunks of large trees, and spreading rich bunches of its blossoms far and wide, even if it have the slenderest stem of some other parasite round which to wind itself. Quite alone, the plant usually shrivels up, and at best deteriorates.

As we rode onward the sandy ridges became toilsome to the mules' feet, and it was here that we first found a specimen of the water-giving plants of the country. Eduardo recognised it instantly, and as he cut its thick stringy stem with his *machete*, a watery fluid oozed out, which had rather a sweet taste. The *mozo* had forgotten the name of this plant, but said it was common in Honduras. He mentioned another of rarer species, which he termed *peligroso* (dangerous), and which from its description must, I think, have referred to the *Mimosa balata*, an india-rubber water-giving plant.

A story is told that a Frenchman passing through Guiana met with this curious production of nature.

The coolness of the fluid as he tasted it induced him, as a precautionary measure, to qualify it with some kind of alcohol. The juice of the shrub coagulated in the unfortunate traveller's stomach, and after a time of intense suffering he died. An examination took place, and it was found that the internal organs were literally closed up by india-rubber.

Thus it should be well understood by travellers in tropical countries that every care must be taken in the use of these wonderful vegetable alleviators of human misery—thirst.

The increasing heat, and the disappointment of not being able to meet with any refreshment in any one of the cottages which we passed, were making us all feel more or less out of sorts. Passing a narrow rivulet, I asked Marcos to fill me the gourd-shell, which wayfarers here always carry at their girdle, with water. "I am so thirsty," I said; "please attend to me quick."

Instead of complying with my request, the man turned round, and resolutely refused. "Not a drop, Señora," said he; "it would hurt you. Your muleteer must not let you drink here; it would be bad for your health."

"Why, Marcos?"

"Because, Señora, the bottom of this rivulet is muddy; there is no sand nor gravel; and look—see! you would not like to risk swallowing one of these!" He pointed to a plant near the mule's hoof: it was covered with dark-brown blossoms, which turned out, on inspection, to be leeches.

"No, no," said Marcos,—"not of this for you, Señora, nor for Eduardo, or the beasts. I know my duty."

I was sure that he did; and though my thirst was great, I said no more on the water question, but

instead I proposed that we should share a bottle of wine, which Don Graciano had generously given me, as he said, "for emergencies."

The bottle was soon produced from the canvas saddle-bags carried by the baggage-mule, speedily uncorked, and a draught poured out for me. No sooner had I tasted it than I returned the gourd to Marcos, with an expression of disgust.

Marcos tasted, and then did Eduardo: wry faces and sputtering were the immediate effects of the taste of the potion on both.

The matter soon explained itself. The heat of the sun and the jogging pace had turned the wine into very strong and very stringent vinegar. There was no help for it, and it was decided that we had better get on to San Juan del Norte as fast as possible.

We had met a peasant in the morning, on his way to work in a maize-field: he directed us to San Juan del Norte, as being a good station whereat to pass the night and replenish our commissariat, which was becoming very low. It was therefore with great vigour that we pushed on to San Juan del Norte.

The character of the land had now greatly changed, and we passed through marshy grass-land, which presented no interesting features, and was very heavy for the mule's feet. We travelled through this for some time, and a thick soft rain, which fell with the dusk, did not improve matters. At length, in a down-pour, we did reach San Juan del Norte, Eduardo having ridden forward to secure accommodation, and search out the decentest dwelling.

I saw by the expression of the lad's face, as we rode into a little square of mean houses, that he was far from being delighted with the

quarters which necessity had forced upon us. "It is a dreadful place, Señora," said he, in a whisper; "I have been to two houses, but this old woman's seems the best."

I looked round before dismounting, and perceived an old woman, who might be any age she liked to call herself after seventy, with white hair, and a very handsome pair of black eyes and eyebrows. She was followed by a train of men, who might be her sons and grandsons; and beyond these were several girls, mostly of the lowest class, who stared with all their might, but said nothing. These were waiting to see me dismount.

Whether the cause was fatigue, combined with the long fast and the damp, I never could explain, for I had not felt ill; but as soon as Marcos had placed me on the ground, the whole of San Juan del Norte seemed to revolve on a pivot, and I fell down in a dead faint. A sensation of being dragged forward, and the sound of voices a long way off, was the last perception of my senses. For many minutes all things were lost in utter unconsciousness.

The return to life was not effected in the usual method of administering cold water, smelling-salts, or other restoratives suitable to the attack; but the pungent *aguardiente* (brandy), which Marcos not only applied to my nostrils but forced down my throat also, was strong enough to rouse a rhinoceros from the deepest swoon.

My eyes quickly opened, and half raising myself in the hammock, I gasped out, "Oh, give me air! Marcos, send these people away; and where did you get that horrid stuff?"

The old woman here advanced, and stood on her dignity. "Señora," said she, "do not be offended; these people come to receive you

after the fashion of the country; it is our custom when the stranger enters our village for all the inhabitants to come out and offer welcome. The rain has prevented many from being here; but see, there are still some few."

Looking past her, I saw that a number of persons were standing in a group near the door, and evidently with the intention of staying there until something should be said or done. So, getting out of the hammock, weak and giddy enough, I managed to bow to the company, and say to the old woman in particular, that I hoped the inhabitants would excuse me, for I was really ill, and it was imperative that I should be alone for a while.

The company in general seemed inclined to linger; but Marcos strode amongst them, and with a sweep of one hand opened the door, whilst with the other he signed to them to make speedy exit. This was done with the air of an emperor, and without the utterance of a single word.

Marcos then asked Eduardo to go and look after the mules, and turning to the woman said—

"Hay lache aqui?" (Have you milk here?)

"Nada," (none) was the reply.

"Hay carne o tortillas?" (Have you meat or bread?)

"No," was the decided reply.

"Hay cafe?" (Have you coffee?)

"Tampoco." (Nor that either.)

Here was a state of things; and though the woman was perfectly civil, she did not make the slightest attempt to alleviate matters.

The muleteer, with a shrug of his shoulders, then went out, saying he must go and buy food, wherever he could find it, and I was left alone with the "lady" of the house.

"Can I not have some place where I can be private?" I asked her gently. "Any corner will do, as I have brought my own hammock."

"You can sling your hammock from these hooks," she replied, pointing to two large iron stanchions which projected from the solid beam running along the roof.

"But have you no sleeping apartments for the females of your family?" I inquire.

"What for? We all sling our hammocks at night in this room. I have a bed-place, because I am too old to move about much. We lie down in our clothes, and when the men go out to work in the morning, then we dress."

The guides coming in soon after the close of this dialogue, I consulted with them as to what was to be done; and asked if my hammock could not be slung in the verandah at the back of this dwelling.

I was told that this was impossible. The rain was pouring steadily down. I must lie down in my clothes, and we would get away as early as possible on the morrow. Meanwhile Marcos had been able to get some coffee made, and he suggested that in the absence of my guides to fetch this, I might change my shoes and arrange my dress as best I could.

There was nothing else to be done, and after my hammock was slung, and the mosquito-net thrown over it, I was supposed to be "quite private," although in the course of the evening six persons of different sexes stepped into the other hammocks, and laid themselves down for the night's rest. The old woman took off her upper garment, tied her head up in a cotton handkerchief, stepped into her bed-place, and without curtain

or mosquito-net travelled off to the land of Nod.

The rain had driven the mosquitoes into the dwelling, and at a later hour these pests became intolerable. A stir from without arrested my attention, and presently a lad with an iron brasier entered, lighted a candle which was stuck against the wall, and returning to the brasier, seemed to stir it up. At that instant a smoke and a most fearful smell pervaded the whole room, suffocating and nauseous in the extreme. I drew my net over my head, and lay wondering what this could mean; but nobody else seemed to be annoyed, or even to take notice of the nuisance. A more miserable night I never passed; and it was with the greatest thankfulness that I saw a gleam of the morning's light through the door which opened to let the first riser out.

Eduardo soon entered, and expressed a hope that I had not suffered from the smoke, a flavour of which still pervaded the apartment. "It is worse than peat," he said, "for it is the droppings of the stable and cow-shed, which, when dry, are burnt, and are the most effectual remedy known against an invasion of mosquitoes at night; but I know, Señora, you must have been nearly poisoned by the smell."

Soon after, the mules and baggage were ready, and Marcos informed me with great satisfaction that he had been able to procure a supply of *queso* (cheese). This "cheese" is really nothing better than curd, very sour and hard, turned up with yellow borders. Being very much compressed, it takes up small space, and is usually eaten with *tortillas* in all parts of the interior.

We took leave of the woman of the house, and as I pressed a small gratuity into her hand, I thanked

her for the shelter her roof had afforded us. This was but right, as it was quite in her power to have refused us admission altogether; and it was not for a traveller to grumble when the entertainment provided was such as the highest and lowest in the country are accustomed to as a matter of course; and, indeed, they know no other. A bowl of milk had been procured, which I drank before mounting, and thus I felt provisioned for the day.

Our journey, after some miles of travel, began to be on the ascent, and shortly we were far up the mountains. Here, losing the luxuriance of herbage and grass, we came upon rock and cedar and pine trees. Clumps of these last grew in great profusion, scenting the air with the peculiar healthy smell of the Aleppo fir, which, alternating with masses of the elegant deodara tree, gave a magnificent clothing to tracts of land which might otherwise be bare. The mountain was not a high one, but the descent on the other side was so abrupt that I was glad to get off and walk, notwithstanding that the path was little else than an assemblage of loose stones, mingled with gravel and dust. Gradually this path narrowed, and we entered a high defile, so full of rock and holes and enormous roots of trees, that every step had to be picked with care, and our wary baggage-mule slipped for the first time, and more than once seemed on the verge of tumbling head over heels.

Here I could not help admiring the wonderful skill, and, I may say, the tact of both mule and muleteer. Did Marcos run forward, and, by the short rope which was attached to the head, guide the baggage-mule to another part, or jump with her from stone to stone, Luisa would stop, look at

what was going on in front, and imitate precisely what her companion was being led to do. The *macho*, being younger, required all Eduardo's care, and it often displayed an inclination to kick every stone to pieces that came in its way. Sometimes the beasts would decline to walk where Marcos guided them; and when they refused the path, it was always because insecure stones or a hole were in the way, or some obstacle which the muleteer had overlooked. Marcos, on his part, never insisted where the mules steadily refused to go onwards. "They are very wise," said he; "they know better where to walk than I do. They like my help when they really need it, poor mules!"

Then with a touch or a pat the mules were told conversationally how hard it was for us others; and further on the man called, "Mulas, mulas, do you not hear the sound of the water? On, my mulas, on."

A grateful sound we all heard, that of a low rushing noise, rising and falling like the murmur of the wind. It was the voice of a brawling stream, which flowed at the outlet of the defile. Save the rush of little children's feet over an upper floor, there is no sound sweeter to me than the rippling of a running stream over a pebbly bed in the hot summer-tide. Weary and travel-stained as we were, what in nature could give us kinder welcome than the call of the delicious water, with its wealth of cascade and spout and gentle flow? Water that here contained within itself a myriad of loving voices, one of which specially seemed to tell us that it was waiting to lave our feet, and spread out wide a veil of argentine drops, should we descend further into its depths to bathe and live.

We had heard its call from afar; and now the mules quickened their pace and snuffed the air, and we human things pulled ourselves together, and marched bravely forward, for down a winding path in front we had descried a glint of the tossing stream—a friend indeed.

Eduardo ran forward, and, boy-like, dashed into the brook, danced from stone to stone, and danced again, and plunged his head into the water, and shouted, "*La agua, la querida agua!*" (the water, the beloved water!) and then, between him and Marcos, I was taken from the saddle, and in their strong arms I found myself seated on the bank on the opposite side, wondering.

A moment or two afterwards a gourd-shell was filled for my use, and I was asked to drink to *El Hondo*, the water-god of this lovely region, from whom old legend saith the name of Honduras is derived.

Dear water-sprite, whoever you may be, or whoever you may have been, I did drink to you with a benison; for did I not feel thankful that at last in your sweet domain I could indulge in the salutary life-giving bath? I forgot San Juan del Norte and all its woes, as I called to my attendants to search for a secluded spot in which I might wash and be clean. Right willingly did I drink to *El Hondo*.

The mules were taken across and unloaded, as there was plenty of grass, and we decided to remain two hours in this shady spot; for here it would seem that the sun had retired in favour of *El Hondo*, and we were willing to take advantage of the comforts which were poured upon us. Eduardo routed from among the wraps an old blue bathing-gown, which had generally served as a

mattress for my hammock, and armed with soap and towels, I made my way to the primitive bathing-place.

"Now, Señora," said this good young fellow, "you will be as private as possible, and we will go a good way off, and will be sure to watch and prevent anybody coming near you. Marcos and I will light a fire and make the coffee, and we can eat our breakfast before you are finished. And I will have your breakfast ready—we have got eggs—and then when you breakfast, we can smoke and sleep; eh, Señora?"

This arrangement suited me well, and I found my way a little up-stream, to a curvature in the bank, which served admirably for the purpose, as it was screened by a mass of low-spreading bushes, and in its centre stood a high stone, over which a mimic cascade just made impetus enough to act as a shower-bath. It would be ungracious to pass over the enjoyment of the delicious luxury, without a word to those who sit at home, and perhaps cannot believe that a bath can be taken in this wise in the open air without some infringement of delicacy.

"My friends," I reply to such objectors, "there is much more immodesty in the bathing-places of Brighton, Havre, Dieppe, where the meretricious costumes displayed under the name of 'bathing-dress,' are enough in many cases to strike terror into the most hardened beholder. Witness the fat objects who crusade down the beach in bolster-cases, short at knee, and denuded at bosom; and who know, and are not unwilling to know, that their masculine acquaintance are looking on with more or less of criticism, according as their feelings may be benevolent or malevolent."

Here there was no gaping grinning crowd, and I felt strong in the conviction that my guides would abhor the slightest attempt to look upon me until I should be dressed. Had I gallivanted about in a harlequin's attire, such as is seen constantly on the persons of the bathers at fashionable watering-places in England, they, in their uncivilisation, would have regarded me with the greatest contempt, and perhaps would have called me mad. So my bath was begun and ended in enjoyable ease and privacy; and my bathing-gown being taken to a bush whereon the sun did shine, I had nothing to do but eat my breakfast, spread on soft grass, about which grows in great profusion many varieties of the *Digitalis*.

The mules had also undergone a rubbing and scrubbing; the harness and baggage were neatly stowed away under the trees; and the men, after attending to my wants, turned to a smoke and a sleep.

They had earned it well and fairly, and so I promised to act sentinel; and whilst they slept, I sat under a tree, and arranged the pages of my journal—a little grey bird, with scarlet-tipped wings, just looking near now and then to see that Soltera was doing the thing fairly.

The delicious coolness and silence of the place was more than compensation for the late wretched night; and it was with real reluctance that I called out "Time," when the two hours allotted for rest had passed away.

The sun was fierce when, after a careful reloading, we again set out: the journey was to be all hill-work, up the side of a grand mountain, which in a short time became so toilsome, that it was all I could do to keep my seat, and even Marcos

was glad to ride longer in his turn with Eduardo than was his wont.

Our accommodation on this night was more comfortable, it being at a farmhouse a little off the highroad. The next day presented no particular features; and the day after that I had occasion to take advantage of Don Graciano's caution with respect to Marcos's propensity for making money in all shapes and ways.

We arrived at a small village, and the public schoolroom had been most kindly placed at our disposal by the master. My hammock was to be slung in the room, and the men were to sleep in the verandah on benches.

I had just settled myself for the night, when, to my surprise, Marcos lifted the latch and walked in.

"Señora," said he, "I want half a dollar, please."

"What for? Why do you come at this time?"

"I have put the mules into the stable of the place, and I want the money to pay for them." This with a very decided air.

"No, Marcos," I replied, "I will not give you the money. In the first place, you had no business to put the mules in the public stables without consulting me; in the second place, you know you expressly promised never to do so unless there were a scarcity of grass and water."

"There is a scarcity of grass and water here."

"That is strange, Marcos; the schoolmaster told me that there was abundance of both; besides, I saw Luisa feeding in a meadow not an hour ago."

"Then you will not pay for stabling, Señora."

"Most certainly not; you can do so if you choose," I replied.

"Señora," answered Marcos, "if you do not give me the money, I

will leave you and go home when we get to Comayagua."

"No, Marcos; if you leave me, you will go to-morrow morning. We can settle at the office of the *alcalde* here; you will have broken your engagement, and so I must place the papers before the *alcalde*, and he will arrange what I am to pay you. Good night; shut the door behind you, and don't come in here till I call. Now go."

The man stared at me, but said nothing. After waiting a moment, he turned on his heel and went out, shutting the door with a clang.

The situation was uncomfortable enough, but I was determined not to be victimised. The matter certainly was small, but to accede to this demand would only be to open the way to further extortion. I plumed myself, too, on the way I had dragged in the *alcalde*, as I had not the faintest idea whether such a functionary existed in the place or not. My sheet-anchor was in reality the schoolmaster, who had promised to call upon me in the morning. But *alcalde* sounded legal and formal, and I felt sure that the word had vanquished Marcos utterly.

Eduardo knocked very early in the morning, and brought in a large red jar of soft water and some nice towels sent by the worthy schoolmaster. The lad looked at me as if something was to be said, but I resolutely held my peace. Had I not heard voices in confabulation under the verandah?

"Go and find out, Eduardo, where the office of the *alcalde* is," I said at length; "we cannot start till I have seen him."

"Señora, the mules are saddled, and we are going to take our coffee, —and—Señora, Marcos would like to speak you —now—Señora; it was the *aguardiente*."

"Let Marcos come in at once,"

I replied, throwing my large shawl over me, and looking as if I had never heard of the man in my life.

Marcos came to me. "Oh, Señora, do not mind the foolish words I said last night," the muleteer exclaimed, looking quite subdued; "it was all a mistake. I am ready to go. The mules are saddled. Señora, I will take care of you, and see that you cross the Juan."

"Very well, Marcos," I answered, "you can do as you please, and I want to start early. Go and get your breakfast now, like a good fellow (*buen hombre*). I am sure you will take me across the river safely."

This time the man went out with a laugh, and I laughed in my sleeve, thankful to have escaped the necessity of consulting the *alcalde*, and all the annoyances which the interview would have surely entailed.

We were soon on our way, led out for a short distance by the

courteous schoolmaster. He had heard from Eduardo, it appeared, all the particulars of the little skirmish with Marcos, and he congratulated me on my victory.

"The men tell me you are a brave little lady," said he.

"I ought to be. I am the daughter and the sister of two brave men who fought and died for their country."

"God rest them! Go you with God." This was the schoolmaster's farewell.

Fairly now on the trot, our object was to cross the river Juan before night, as reports from various persons had agreed as to its being much swollen by recent rain, and that its condition was not favourable for passing over. We therefore travelled fast, hardly waiting to take food. After a few hours we found ourselves on the banks of a wide river, in company with some Indian women who were filling their water-jars at the stream.

THE LIFE OF LORD LYTTON.

BIOGRAPHY in its present form is altogether a modern invention. Of yore the records of the most famous men were seldom longer than the magazine article of our day. Reynolds is said to have read through Johnson's life of Pope while standing with his arm resting on the mantelpiece; indeed all Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* together fall short in bulk of the life of Scott, of Dickens, or the present life of Bulwer. The life of Shakespeare, excluding comment and apocrypha, might be contained in a couple of octavo pages. Many famous personages have had no other memoir than notices prefixed to their works. It was Boswell who set the fashion, which his success confirmed, of placing before us not only the great character, but the individual man, with his mode of utterance in speech and in letters, his prejudices, the incidents of his daily life, his peculiar ways, his bodily aspect, and his garments. A further stage was reached when a near relative or a professed eulogist undertook the office of biographer; sometimes with excellent results, as in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, but only too often displaying chiefly the inordinate devotion of the chronicler. Finally, we have the deliberate autobiography—the author's recollections and revised journalising about himself—which, if in some respects a more authentic and intimate chronicle than could have been framed by any other person, may also, quite unconsciously to the writer, be more than commonly deceptive. The most notable example, perhaps, which exists of that rare

production—a sincere self-portraiture by a genuine man—is the *Autobiography of Anthony Trollope*.

For all these forms of biography an appetite prevails so general and so insatiable, that a great many readers find entertainment in the lives of persons who were in no way specially remarkable. When Smith's *Life of Brown*, Robinson's of Jones, do not pass unappreciated, the *Life of Bulwer* cannot fail of an audience. His endowments were so remarkable as justly to create a desire to know what manner of man their possessor was; and his character was so marked, individual, and interesting, as well to repay the inquiry. When he died, ten years ago, he had been for more than forty years a personage—a personage, too, the current of whose fame was fed by so many streams that it went on expanding to the end. As a novelist, popular from the first, he was one of the very few whose genius gained in strength and flavour with time. 'The Caxtons,' written in middle life, and published in these pages, was an immense advance on 'Pelham'; and the tale of his completed works showed such variety of high-class excellence, that it was rightly said in an obituary notice of him in this Magazine, that his death had deprived his country of her foremost man of letters. He was always writing, and never at any stage showed a sign of having written himself out. He succeeded to the audience, and in some degree partook of the characteristics, of two famous writers who could no longer satisfy the tastes they

had created. At a time when Byron was still a pagan deity, worshipped by romantic youth, Bulwer arose to carry on the Byronic tradition. Don Juan, clad by a fashionable tailor, and with a seat in Parliament, frequently reappeared among us, and was always sure of a Donna Julia in the boudoirs of Mayfair or of the Faubourg St Germain. Prose Laras and Corsairs and Giaours again stalked before us, intoning the sentiments which the young called passionate, the old high-flown. And at the same time, to no quarter did the admirers of Scott look with more interest than to the young author of 'Pelham' and 'Devereux.' His aim, like Scott's, was the representation of an epoch, whether the present or another, by painting its manners and setting its imaginary men in action. But the difference in their methods was too complete to admit of any comparison, and may be seen, in a compendious form, in the prefaces introductory to later editions of their novels. While Scott narrates in these the circumstances under which the incidents and characters of his story were impressed on his memory, or were bodied forth by his imagination, and how the tale itself subsequently took shape in his mind, Bulwer gives us an essay on the philosophy of art, states an abstract problem in life or conduct, and explains how the ensuing novel is its demonstration. Bulwer's method had its own special value, and it was infinitely better that he should work in his own way than imitate Scott, however successfully. But in these days, when the wand of the Northern Magician is losing its power with each successive generation, it is only just to record our conviction that, even in employing the resources of the art which he seems to ignore, he is supreme.

We have never wavered in our belief, after all that has been said by devotees about Miss Austen and Charlotte Brontë, about Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Victor Hugo, that Scott at his best is the prince of novelists. Certainty of touch, richness of colour, interest of plot, vitality of character, humour, pathos, descriptive faculty, set forth in narrative the genial ease of which conveys a sense of mastery and power, combine to place him on a height unapproached by any other writer of romance.

Be that as it may, there was a large public ready for Bulwer, and he was a favourite with it from the first. For readers of primitive tastes there was great variety of romantic incident, situation, and adventure; while another large class was attracted by the evidence of thought and the mixture of philosophy which seemed to render novel-reading respectable by elevating story-telling to a higher stage. And while his novels were the mainstay of his popularity, there were other fields in which he was a personage of mark, and his successes in which widened and strengthened the foundations of his fame. Essays, in themselves evidences of a mind unusually thoughtful and discursive; poetry, both original and in the form of translations from ancient and modern classics; plays which managers accepted and audiences applauded; speeches in Parliament and a place in the Cabinet—combined to keep him before the public as a man not merely of great but of singularly various ability.

When he was about fifty he began an autobiography which forms the substance of the first volume of the *Life*; but it was never completed, and does not even include the beginning of the literary and public career, the record of which must supply the chief interest of

the biography. Apart from the skilled workmanship of the practised chronicler, the recollections of his childhood and youth are not likely to inspire, or to satisfy, curiosity; but they contain one incident of importance, for it left a permanent mark on his mind and his works, and illustrates what will be to many an unsuspected quality of his nature.

When he was between seventeen and eighteen, and while living as a pupil in the house of a clergyman at Ealing, he had a mysterious love-adventure. For a time not specified, but apparently lasting through the summer, he used to meet, under a dwarf tree overhanging a little stream in a meadow near Ealing, a young lady about his own age, whose time was left very much at her own disposal. Whatever attractions she may have derived from the glow of his fancy, it is apparent that he saw in her something like a divinity. He repaired to their meetings with the feelings with which Rhæcus may have sought the oak where dwelt his Dryad. Her face always continued to be his ideal of beauty; her affection, no less strong than his own, his ideal of feminine tenderness. She was for him glorified into a being sacred beyond humanity, to be approached with feelings as devout as they were ardent. But admiration even so deep as this is not unexampled in lovers of eighteen. The empire which Mary Chaworth established over Byron at an earlier age was powerful enough to be the inspiration at a later time of some of his most pathetic and popular poetry. But Byron's may be called a boy's fancy in comparison with the permanency of Bulwer's devotion. Like Rhæcus he soon lost his goddess for ever, and she was mourned for as only goddesses should be mourned—that is to say, as a man may lament

throughout his life the loss of what had promised happiness too great for expectation, and which not even fancy could ever restore. It was, he says, "a brief tale of true passion and of great sorrow—a tale never to be told." One day she failed to meet him, and never came again. "Some months afterwards there came a letter. Not from her. She was married. She, whose heart, whose soul, whose every thought was mine to the last, she who never spared even a dream to another, lost, lost to me for ever!"

Three years later, when dying, she wrote to him expressing a wish that he should visit her grave. He made a pilgrimage to the north of England in obedience to this desire, passed a night of suffering on the spot, yet left it at dawn "as if rebaptised or reborn. I recovered the healthful tone of my mind; and the stage of experience and feeling through which my young life had passed contributed largely to render me whatever I have since become." This, however, was far from implying that here he dismissed his sorrowful remembrance of the past. The anguish of that night was recorded in a poem called "The Tale of a Dreamer." It was inevitable that this should recall Byron's "Dream." The two cases were so strikingly similar in their chief incidents, that had they been tales of fiction, one would have been condemned as a copy. Whole passages might be quoted from the earlier poem which would exactly apply to the later history. Remembering how strong was the influence of Byron on the clever young men of those days, it was certain that the later utterance, though the outpouring of strong and genuine feeling, would be more or less an echo. Yet Bulwer had more than common power of verification, and his lines, though

not calculated to catch the ear or charm the fancy like the melodious lament of Byron, are good poetry,—infinitely better than the doggerel—also inspired by admiration of Byron—which his clever contemporary found a place for in the pages of, we think, ‘*Venetia*.’ In Bulwer’s first published novel, ‘*Falkland*,’ the hero’s recollections of his youth contain the brief but exact record of the real incidents. In an essay in the ‘*Student*’ there is a kind of prose monody inspired by the same deep sorrow. The epic of “*King Arthur*,” written long afterwards, has three fine stanzas, which owe their inspiration to that early source. And in the last work he ever wrote, when quite an old man, the love episode was still a transcript of these ineffaceable impressions. His son tells us that he was greatly agitated in reading the manuscript aloud,—that when the chapter was finished describing Kenelm Chillingly’s sufferings at Lily’s grave, he was dejected to a degree that his listeners were unable at that time to account for. Besides all these testimonies of his unforgotten grief, many passages throughout his works assure us of its enduring influence in his heart.

It is not our function to reconcile the undoubted depth and permanency of this attachment with the susceptibility to the charms of the other sex which the biography shows to have been a main feature of his early life, and which is proved by the whole course of his novels to have characterised him to the end. He owned soon afterwards a very different kind of enchantment, under the spells of a very different kind of siren. Lady Caroline Lamb, best known by the connection of her name with Byron’s, a very frisky matron of somewhat mature years, took a fancy to the clever young colle-

gian, and flirted and corresponded with him for some months of the very year of Byron’s death; but she soon abandoned him for “Mr Russell, a fashionable beau, extremely handsome, but dull, insipid, and silly.” The effect of this intimacy may be traced (besides in several unpublished novels) in the Lady Roseville of ‘*Pelham*’ and the Lady Hasselton of ‘*Devereux*’; and he may have repeated in other novels the favourite situation, probably derived from “*Don Juan*,” of the introduction of the hero to fashionable life, and to the extreme of flirtation, by a mature but still charming lady, generally the friend of his mother.

Bulwer was entered at Cambridge, first at Trinity, then at Trinity Hall. The intellectual youth is fortunate who meets early with gifted and congenial associates, for he probably gains from them the best part of his education. He learns to recognise various kinds of excellence, to measure himself with others, to know his relative powers, and finds in his intercourse with high minds both a chief pleasure and a chief stimulus. Bulwer’s associates were Præd, “first in readiness and wit,” but who never fulfilled the promise of his youth; Cockburn, who was probably indebted for much of his later success to his college reputation, and who displayed to the last qualities better suited to dazzle undergraduates than to impress his brethren of the bench; Charles Buller, Wilson, and Maurice; and Benjamin Hall Kennedy, “a young giant in learning.” With these Bulwer took part in the debates of the Union Club.

“Men came from London to hear us. . . . The greatest display of eloquence I ever witnessed at the club was made by a man some years our senior, and who twice came up during my residence to grace our debates—

the now renowned Macaulay. The first of these speeches was on the French Revolution; and it still lingers in my recollection as the most heart-stirring effort of that true oratory which seizes hold of the passions, transports you from yourself, and identifies you with the very life of the orator, that it has ever been my lot to hear—saving, perhaps, one speech by O'Connell, delivered to an immense crowd in the open air. Macaulay—in point of power, passion, and effect—never equalled that speech in his best day in the House of Commons. His second speech, upon the Liberty of the Press, if I remember rightly, was a failure."

In these debates Bulwer was a conspicuous figure; he also succeeded in gaining a general reputation for ability, and in exercising that power of application which always distinguished him; and won the prize for English poetry, in a poem on Sculpture, dealing (we may venture to assume) rather with the picturesque than the technical aspect of that difficult art.

The autobiography ends with his twenty-second year, soon after he had left college. It is probable that, to all but his intimate acquaintances, he appeared at this time as a youth merely eccentric and dandified, and perhaps affected—characteristics which, joined to his sense of superiority, were likely rather to repel than to attract. But those who knew him better had already learned to expect that his ambition and capacity would conduct him to eminence. The only doubt was as to which of the many paths open to him he would select. He had it in him to become an essayist, a writer of fiction, a poet, a parliamentary orator, or a student. Nor was he without experience of a kind very uncommon at his age. He had looked on the world with an observant eye, exercising his activity of mind and his constructive faculty in framing theories

about the philosophy of life; while the grief he had passed through had struck in his nature a chord which vibrated through his whole existence, and imparted to all his thoughts and works a tone of serious romance.

His choice of literature as the chief occupation of his life was determined by the unfortunate circumstances of his early manhood. A mutual interest sprang up between him and Rosina Wheeler, a young Irish lady of great beauty. His mother, for what will seem to most mothers just and excellent reasons, strongly opposed the match. His income, independent of what his mother gave him, was quite insufficient to marry on. Miss Wheeler had next to nothing; and her mother, who lived separate from her husband, was "the *bel esprit* of a little group of socialists and free-thinkers, to the support of whose doctrines she devoted both her purse and her pen." It was inevitable that Mrs Bulwer, ambitious for her son, and building his future happiness on a very different kind of alliance, should be actively hostile to this; and Bulwer, the most affectionate of sons, believing that it was not a case where the affections on either side were strongly engaged, promised his mother that he would not marry without her consent. Having given Miss Wheeler, to whom he was at that time under no engagement, to understand what his mother's view of the matter was, and that he was entirely dependent on her, he betook himself to a distance from temptation. But he was presently made aware that there was another side to the question, which he could not thus easily dispose of. Miss Wheeler, far from making a corresponding effort, let him know that she was quite prepared to brave his mother's

opposition. It was under these circumstances that Bulwer, weighing his obligations to each, found himself so bound to Miss Wheeler, whose singular family circumstances had left her unusually friendless, that he could not keep his promise to his mother. He therefore returned to the young lady, and engaged himself; upon which there ensued a correspondence with his mother, full, on his part, of openness, reasonableness, and affectionate pleading. Up to this point Mrs Bulwer had done nothing inconsistent with the truest wish for the welfare of her favourite son. Had his choice fallen more happily, she would have been the most indulgent of parents; and that his fate should have impelled him in a direction so opposed to her views, was a terrible misfortune for both. But it was simply a misfortune—one in which both parties were absolutely right from their own points of view, and fate only was to blame. A new situation, however, now presented itself with his marriage. The time of remonstrance was over, but not, unhappily, the time of maternal displeasure. His mother was for years unappeasable, though her son, whenever an opening was afforded, continued to address her in terms the most manly and affectionate,—such as cannot fail to impress the reader with the sense that here was a character revealing itself, under heavy pressure, as of unusual strength and excellence, and such also, we will say, as should have restored him to her affection. But the mother's sense of injury prevailed. Representing his breach of faith to her as the cause of estrangement,—though the real sting probably lay in the defeat of her hopes for a match such as should correspond with her high and just sense of her son's value,—she not only broke off all

intercourse with him, but accepted his resignation of the large allowance which he had hitherto received from her. The marriage took place in 1827, when he was twenty-four; and the imprudence of that step—always foreseen and admitted by him—at once made itself felt. The young pair might have lived on what they had in a humble and economical way. But Bulwer's projects were different. Though all his life a man of careful habits, he thought nothing extravagant that could minister to the enjoyment of his wife, who had not herself the slightest idea of economy or management; and they started on a large scale of expenditure, thus entering on a course which led in more than one way to disastrous consequences.

Bulwer's sense of honour was so high, that the endeavour to continue to live beyond his means would have been to him an impossibility. But he believed, and proved, that he could by his own efforts raise his means to the level of his expenses. In the determination to do this, he accepted every kind of literary work that was offered to him. Magazines, reviews, newspapers, and the volumes known to that generation as annuals, received incessant contributions from his pen, very few of which have been rescued, or, probably, have been found worth rescuing, from the oblivion which naturally awaited them. It was not wholesome literary work—it was toil and drudgery. But at the same period he found time to finish 'Pelham,' which, pleasing the public, brought him offers for novels advantageous enough. To justify him in devoting his pen henceforth chiefly to the compositions which exercised all his best faculties, and have made him famous. But the incessant activity of his mind, and the labours to which

it prompted him, proved too much for his never robust health. Even this result was not more lamentable than the effect on his domestic life. "So incessantly," wrote his wife to his mother, "is he occupied, that I seldom or never see him, till about two or three in the morning, for five minutes." It is evident that no amount of literary labour would account sufficiently for this neglect of his wife—and that, if the statement is not exaggerated, she had grave cause of complaint. Many circumstances are wanting to explain a situation which is in itself incredible. However this may be, things were evidently tending, even in these early days, towards the estrangement which finally became irremediable.

The novels which he produced within the period of his life comprehended in the present instalment of biography, were five in number—namely, 'Falkland,' 'Pelham,' 'Devereux,' 'The Disowned,' and 'Paul Clifford.' 'Falkland' was written before his marriage,—a gloomy story, or, rather, an essay upon a distressing situation created for characters which were mostly too unattractive to excite much interest in the reader, yet displaying earnestness and power. Perhaps the best testimony to its merit is his mother's really clever criticism, conveyed in a letter, in which, after enthusiastic praise of what she deemed its excellences, she freely censured its faults, ending by saying, "Child, this is unworthy of you." It was his next book, 'Pelham,' which gained his public and fixed his vocation. A few years before, Disraeli had made a clever coxcomb his hero, and showed how amusing the sketch of sheer audacity, giving the adventurer, its possessor, an extraordinary influence in what was then called "high life," might

be. Pelham also was a clever coxcomb; he, too, moved in the fashionable and political world, showing an adroitness far beyond his years, and exercising an influence far beyond his position. But Pelham was also represented as a man of honour, with sentiment and principle beneath his coxcombry; and his cleverness, instead of ending as Vivian Grey's ended, in the exposure of an unprincipled charlatan, led him to success, and his varied career, interesting all through, left the reader satisfied as well as pleased. The immaturity of the author is, it is true, frequently visible: the conduct of the hero during his canvass of a constituency, intended to display his dexterity, was more adapted to broad comedy than to a novel, and would in real life have appeared as vulgar impudence; in the clever episode of the student Clutterbuck, that personage's simplicity and antique phraseology are overdrawn; while in the entertaining scenes with the *gourmet*, Lord Guloseton, their creator would not, a few years later, have represented the gluttonous host as entertaining a single guest at a dinner, meant to be especially choice, with, besides a pair of fowls, *entrées* of *filets de poulet* and of veal—a combination quite incredible on the part of a professed epicure, and therefore false to the picture. But there was a vivacity and impetus in the book which would have carried the reader airily over greater defects than these. There was a melodramatic thread woven into the plot which perhaps pleased more than it offended; and the character of Glanville, so strongly imbued with the odour of the footlights as to seem now quite incongruous in a tale of ordinary life, had for readers of those days this much in common with Pelham, that each was a different phase of the Byronic

hero. And all the merits of the book were far more conspicuous then than now, when as a picture of manners it is somewhat obsolete, and gave assurance no less of versatility than of power.

This versatility displayed itself in the subject of his next work, 'Devereux,' intended to be a picture of the times of Queen Anne. Here the melodramatic element came out very strongly indeed. The hero's brothers, and tutor, and wife, and father-in-law, are of the stagiest; and on such grounds it is dismissed in the biography with less respect than, as we think, it deserves. The hero is a very fair hero; and the early scenes at Devereux Court, with the clever and pleasant characters of Sir William the uncle, an embodiment of the spirit and the reminiscences of Charles the Second's Court, and the Lady Hasselton, the clever, light-souled, artificial fine lady of the De Coverley period, have always seemed to us among the most agreeable he ever painted.

'The Disowned' was constructed on a principle which could hardly produce a good novel—that of embodying abstract qualities, and setting them in motion, like chessmen, to work out some moral problem. "Vanity (Talbot); Ambition (Warner); Pride (Lord Borodaile); Selfishness and Sensuality (Crawfurd); Philanthropy (Mordaunt);" such is the author's own list of his *dramatis personæ*, as set forth in a preface—the design being, he says, "to personify certain dispositions influential upon conduct." Except John Bunyan (who did not write novels), nobody ever succeeded on such a plan, which, however, some whose genius was most opposed to it have been at times so ill-advised as to follow: thus the ugly puppets, old Martin Chuzzlewit, and young Martin, and Anthony, and Jonas, were

intended, their fabricator tells us, as different manifestations of selfishness, their rag- and-sawdust material becoming all the more apparent from association with such spontaneous personages as Mrs Gamp, Mr Mould, and the party at Todgers's, who drew their origin from a very different source. Theory of this kind was always more or less an element of Bulwer's plan, and indeed was an essential quality of his literary faculty; and, in less degree, we find it inspiring his next novel, 'Paul Clifford.' The motive of this book was to expose some of the defects of the criminal law of the time. But this is evidently a much more practicable scheme than that of personifying abstract qualities; and the book was popular, notwithstanding an unsightly excrescence in the shape of an attempt to caricature public men of the time (mixed with some abstractions as "the Whigs in general," "the Scotch ditto") under the guise of a gang of highwaymen. Of the popularity of the work there can be no doubt. Not only did it please novel-readers, but as letters from well-known literary men show, caused the author to be regarded as a growing power in literature; while the biographer claims for it a share in the reform of the criminal law. A few years afterwards, Dickens, consciously or unconsciously, worked on the same lines in 'Barnaby Rudge,' even to the extent of reproducing the main incident, in the final attitude of Mr Chester towards his convicted son the ostler; the tale, as usual, owing its vitality to the characters outside the theory, as the Varden family and the party at the Maypole—while the hero Barnaby is much less of a real personage than his own raven.

Thus far is Bulwer's literary career followed in the present vol-

umes. His books had made him a popular novelist and something more. While one large section of his public listened eagerly to the skilful *raconteur*, another found more serious satisfaction in the thoughtful writer whose romances were a treat for the intellect. It was certain that he would improve with practice, for his novels were the result of skill. His faculty was constructive, not creative. He had none of that power of imparting individuality to his personages by which Scott and Dickens have peopled the world of imagination with characters whom we quote and converse about as if they were our personal acquaintances. His faculty of humour was small—that he should have had more would have been inconsistent with the general cast of his mind and bent of his thoughts. Of wit he had keener perception, and there is a great deal of it in his novels, especially in the condensed form of epigrammatic phrases and smart sayings; yet it seldom seems spontaneous, looking rather like the product of a theory framed from analysing the wit of others, and therefore fails as often as it succeeds. But he wove a good plot, and strengthened it with vivid situations to which the course of the story led up,—as where Brandon the judge condemns Clifford the highwayman to death, after having just learned that the convict is his son—where the guidance of Nydia, the blind girl, enables the lovers of Pompeii to escape amid the darkness from the doomed city—and where Zanonni takes his wife's place beneath the guillotine. This constructive faculty came out again conspicuously in his plays, which contained for the chief personages situations such as actors love; while the characters afforded outlines that, in the hands of such artists as Macready and Helen Faucit, grew into im-

personations of so great vitality as has borne them down the stream of time to our own day. "Richelieu," "Money," and the "Lady of Lyons" have all been played very recently to full audiences. This thoughtful and careful attention to construction was properly accompanied by an equal solicitude for expression. His style was, or grew to be, in the main excellent. At a time when a flood of washy literature—especially the writings of clever men who, capable of better things, have to work against time for the fleeting occasion—has corrupted the Queen's English, it is restorative to turn to the best composition of Bulwer. And while his range of subjects presents more variety than that of any other novelist, his work never failed to be distinguished by erudition as well as power. It was always evident that the care to make it as good as he could extended into every particular, and that is a compliment to readers which they always appreciate.

Mixed with these sterling qualities was an element which, respecting them so highly as we do, we may venture to notice; indeed it is too characteristic to be passed over in an estimate of his literary qualities—namely, a kind of staginess, the more curious because associated with the excellent common-sense which was more and more, as years wore on, a main feature of his work. In his pages, along with clever and practical men of the world, we meet with the personages of melodrama, arrayed as if by Nathan, and intended to impress the reader by dint of the fine sayings put in their mouths and the fine things said about them by the author. In unison with these are the phrases descriptive of their doings. Drawing-rooms are "halls of pleasure,"—heroes of the piece have a "knightly bearing," or other exalted attributes—an elder-

ly lawyer "bows his kingly crest,"—and perhaps the climax of this kind of phraseology was reached when Roland, the representative of Sterne's Uncle Toby, in the 'Caxtons,' denounces his son, who has attempted to carry off a young lady, as "baffled ravisher!" And in the same vein, which runs through all his works to the last, are passages of rhapsody,—as, for instance, in the excellent novel 'Night and Morning,' where stages of the narrative are marked by semi-poetical flights embodying some supposed analogy between the progress of events and the change from night to morning. But we are far from thinking that what were blots to a refined taste did not help him to gain popularity. The "gods," who exist in the reading no less than in the play-going public, enjoyed what was specially addressed to the shilling gallery, and by joining in the applause, helped, in theatrical parlance, to bring the house down. But it is a curious fact, that notwithstanding the undoubted favour of the public, he never gained even the toleration of the critics, who are generally at least quite as prone to follow as to lead popular opinion. Up to the close of his life, and beyond it, he was the subject of habitually unfair and ungenerous comment; indeed we observed lately, with reference to the present biography, a stupid sneer at him in a weekly journal, remarkable chiefly for its crotchets and its parasitical devotion to Mr Gladstone.

The melodramatic tendency evident in his works, found expression also in his manner and attire, in this, as well as in his literary aspect, serving to intensify his individuality. His son describes him at twenty-two as "a good-looking, dandified, and eccentric but decidedly clever and ambitious

young man." His harmless eccentricities of costume did not cease with youth; the present writer saw them in full efflorescence when he was past fifty. These adornments, which perhaps he had imagined as picturesque investments for some of his heroes, were of the florid kind, coming out in silks and velvets, remarkable trousers, brooches, pins, and even straps, making up an *ensemble* such as might have been gathered from the wardrobes of Charles Mathews and Edmund Kean. We remember an old lady, his guest, after surveying him with respectful admiration, in his sufficiently unconventional attire, turning to us with the eager question, "Have you seen him in his velvet hat?" a privilege which we shortly afterwards enjoyed. This taste for splendour he shared, as he shared other peculiarities of character, with a novelist and statesman, his friend and contemporary, who loved to invest himself, no less than his imaginary characters, with spoils won in incursions into the tailor's art so daring, that, in one instance, even Bulwer owned to a misgiving. Writing to Disraeli about the manuscript of the novel of the 'Young Duke,' he suggests, "I would give matured attention to the Duke's dress. I confess I think the blond edgings too bold"—a criticism which, among others, seems to have preyed on Mr Disraeli's mind. We must leave it to students of the work to discover whether the blond edgings were sacrificed, or whether Mr Disraeli found himself unable to part with them. When the novelists first met, in their youth, the habiliments which each, being specially on his mettle, would have thought suited to convey a due impression of the magnificence of his fancy to the other, must have displayed extraordinary powers of invention.

Also there were not wanting, to increase the singularity of Bulwer's presence, gloomy smiles, stately bows, and lofty gestures, suitable to a stage potentate. Yet with all this, his appearance was naturally distinguished and striking. He was an excellent man of business, and a reliable adviser, full of common-sense. He was also exceedingly good-natured: no man (as the present writer can testify from personal knowledge) could speak more generously, whether of rising aspirants or successful rivals. He never retaliated on his contemporaries the aspersions lavished on himself. None was more ready to help others with friendly offices, or bestowed them with a better grace. He liked to do a service, and showed that he liked it. Ready to listen as well as to talk—entering with warm interest upon a vast variety of topics, and bringing to them unusual stores of knowledge—he was one of the most agreeable of companions, especially in a *tête-à-tête*. In larger companies, a deafness which came upon him with years deprived both him and his associates of much of that pleasure in social intercourse which he enjoyed himself, and largely conferred upon others.

His relations with Mr Disraeli, beginning with mutual courtesies as literary men in 1829, always continued to be cordial; and it is to be reckoned as a notable tribute to Bulwer's rising fame at that time, that the author of 'Vivian Grey' should have submitted the manuscript of his next novel for the opinion and advice of the author of 'Pelham.' There were many points of resemblance between these remarkable men. Both surveyed the problems of life with an inventive as well as a penetrating glance—both were fond of constructing theories about

human nature and how to deal with it—both were confident in putting their theories into practice. Their eccentricities no less than their serious work may have originated in a purpose; even their exuberant dandyism may have been founded on the expectation of attracting by it some additional consideration or attention. Bulwer, as might have been expected from a man of his candour and good sense, never held either of the extreme views which at different times prevailed respecting the powers of Disraeli. When, in his earlier career, he was generally regarded as merely a charlatan, Bulwer recognised the uncommon gifts which conducted him to power and fame; when he had already attained to these, Bulwer did not vary his estimate because of the rising tumult of applause which finally reached such an extraordinary pitch of enthusiasm. A very singular incident in their friendship is Bulwer's construction of what he called a "Geomantic Figure" of the character and career of "B. Disraeli," made in 1860. It is accompanied with an interpretation in the form of a prophecy, drawn from a process of divination. With some passages which persons not of the race of the prophets might have written, there are others, relating to his private as well as his public life, which dealt with the events of the future, and were fulfilled with extraordinary exactness, and much in opposition, as the diviner records, to what he should himself have augured. In a notice like this we should hardly have paused on the incident but for its connection with some remarkable tastes and tendencies, without mention of which any sketch of Bulwer's character would be incomplete. Occult studies, comprising the magic of ancient times as well

as the spiritualism of the present, had a great charm for him, and he entered on them with the earnestness which marked his pursuit of less mysterious knowledge. He dived into wizard-lore, equipped himself with magical implements, rods for transmitting influence, and crystal balls in which to discern coming scenes and persons, and communed with mediums and spiritualists. There can be little doubt that, whatever faith he might have in particular manifestations, he believed in certain occult powers of nature, to deal with which is the object of these mysterious arts. On more than one occasion we have known him to dilate on such themes with great copiousness of knowledge, and apparent trustfulness in the reality of their marvels. Once, as he stood before the fire in a large old room in which a *séance* had lately been held by the well-known spiritualist Home, and, his aspect rendered more weird by the theme and the twilight, described the ghostly things that had been apparent,—hands and arms rising through the table, touching those who sat round, revealing, when grasped, the startling fact that they ended at the elbow, and finally rising into the air, clad in a greyish drapery, and floating out of a particular corner of the room; he almost gave a listener the impression of being in the presence of a veritable necromancer. To this taste we are indebted for several well-known works—the novels of ‘Zanoni’ and ‘A Strange Story,’ and the remarkable tale, by common consent the most powerful ghost-story that ever was written, called ‘The Haunted and the Haunters.’ So illusive is the atmosphere of the tale, so vivid the description of its terrifying appearances, and so effective their connection with the agency

of a malignant being possessed of supernatural powers, that on its appearance in this Magazine, an anxious father adjured the Editor for God’s sake to tell him what truth was in it, as his daughter had known no rest or peace since reading it. Not the least interesting part of the biography will be a promised chapter on these mystical studies.

The volumes yet to come will be fuller of interest than the present instalment, for Bulwer went on ripening, and “hiving wisdom with each studious year.” In middle life he entered on a new phase of his career and a new aspect of his reputation. In the ‘Caxtons,’ ‘My Novel,’ ‘What will he Do with It?’ and ‘Kenelm Chillingly,’ the public recognised a maturer wisdom, a wider experience of life, and a more disciplined style, than had hitherto been associated with his name. It was a theory of his that when an author had for a time receded from view, the best way of renewing his intercourse with the public was in the pages of a periodical. It was in ‘Blackwood’ that the first of these novels came out, which, quaintly founded on the relation existing between the chief characters of Tristram Shandy, was so full of playful wisdom and ripe observation, and so distinguished by graces and excellences of style beyond his previous work, that readers hesitated before assigning the authorship to their old favourite. Henceforth he commanded a wider and a choicer audience. John Blackwood was always proud and happy to think that it was through his mediation, either in the Magazine or in separate publications, that most of Bulwer’s work in this later and nobler development of his genius was wont to appear. All through the rest of the novelist’s life the con-

nection between them continued to be marked to the last by cordial friendship, constant correspondence, and consultations and exchange of views on matters connected with his writings, such as the experience and well-known judgment of the publisher rendered especially valuable. The great writer, among the most eminent of those who have adorned these pages, always repaid the warm admiration, tempered by honest judgment, of John Blackwood, with thorough confidence and affectionate regard.

It appears to us that the present Lord Lytton's part in the writing of his father's biography is well and judiciously done. Especial tact has been shown in dealing with the unhappy circumstances of Bulwer's married life, a matter which could not be avoided, and yet was so full of difficulty for the present biographer. His comments on his father's works and genius, while showing the most genuine filial devotion, never pass those limits in eulogy which may ensure every fair-minded reader's assent. We could have wished that what he had to say had not been so overlaid as it is with other matter. At least one of the two volumes before us is filled with an autobiography and with literary remains. A large part of the autobiography is taken up with an account of personages antecedent to his parents, the mention of whose names in the family pedigree would have sufficed, and whose lives and characters cannot be expected to excite any general interest. Another large part is taken up with youthful adventures, met with in rural excursions, which certainly bear a very close resemblance, in all respects, to the incidents described in many of his novels as befalling their heroes, and will therefore inevitably excite

the suspicion, in the case of one so habituated to this vein of composition, that they spring as much from imagination as from memory. And as to the policy of including the literary remains in the present work, there can hardly, we should think, be two opinions. Some of them consist of work abandoned before completion, others of matter which the author did not see fit to publish; and after perusing them, we must say that his judgment in abandoning the one and suppressing the other was right. What makes this arrangement of special importance is, that there remains a vast quantity of heterogeneous writings, consisting of several dramas, a volume of a history, sketches for historical works, and "an immense number of unfinished novels, plays, poems, and essays"—and all of these, we are told, "have been reserved as materials for the present work." Fully respecting the feeling which has impelled Lord Lytton to destine all this to form part of the forthcoming volumes, we would point out that it is a case where (especially with that part of the work before us) ordinary readers are better judges of the result than a biographer so near as he is to his subject in kin and affection; and it is with the sincere desire to see the book made as attractive and as likely to be permanent as possible, that we would urge him still to take the opinion on this important point of some friend in whose judgment he can confide. This is not the case of an obscure or infertile author, whose unpublished writings may be the chief evidence of his title to be remembered. To our mind, such a lavish outpouring of crude or inferior matter as that which is contemplated, can only have the general effect of diluting the *premier cru* of a famous vintage with the washings of the wine-press.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XXI.—ABSENCE.

"Love reckons hours for months, and days for years,
And every little absence is an age."

—DRYDEN.

"I am ten times undone, while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love rise up at once,
And with variety of pain distract me."

—ADDISON.

LIFE in a country town is not surcharged with variety or incident, and can scarcely be called even soberly amusing, unless one has a special taste for shopping, dawdling, dropping in and out of neighbours' houses, and picking up chit-chat at one tea-table to be retailed at another.

It must be said for Clinkton that it boasted some advantages over other places of the kind, in the possession of a cathedral and of a river; and the cathedral had produced for the Tufnells Herbert Mildmay, while the river had been the resource of Jem Challoner. He was now, however, debarred from even that, since the season was unpropitious, while the cathedral did as little for him in its way. He refused to enter it, and was wondered at, hinted at, had his reasons demanded, and his remissness held up to view. Did he object to week-day services? If so, he must not say so before Emily,—but did he? He let them think he did; he let them think almost anything they chose of him, so long as no one suspected a deeper and tenderer objection. Had he not but the other day sat by Matilda's side in the old church at Seaborough, and had they not listened together to the grave quaint music, and afterwards knelt side by side, knelt and prayed,—and he was not a man—God forgive him—who often prayed,—but he

had felt something like this,—if that woman there, that pure, good, beautiful woman, to whom his soul cleaved, if she might only be his, his to help him to a better life, his to lead him onward and upward, he would—and he had made a vow in his heart, and fancied for the moment it must have been heard and accepted in heaven? To go next with Mary Tufnell? With Mary on the one hand, and Emily or Bertha on the other? He could not do it.

So Emily, poor thing, had to go alone, since Bertha gave out distinctly that as it was plain she had to be gooseberry to somebody, she must say she preferred it should be to Jem and Mary; for though Jem was not a lively bird by any means, still he had the pull of Herbert in one way—he was not for ever running round to walk on Mary's side, and opening doors for Mary, and buying presents for Mary, asking Mary if she were tired, and all the rest of it. Herbert made a regular dolly of Emily: Bertha never had the umbrella held over *her*, though it might be that she wore her best hat and Emily her everyday one; she had no nice boxes of goodies slipped into her muff; and she might be on the trudge from morning till night wherever Emily chose to go, without once being asked what she would like or dislike doing.

But Jem, Bertha averred, was a good old chap, and drew no such distinctions.

Indeed, whatever the party was, it was the same to Challoner. He walked and talked indiscriminately, he never bought anything for anybody, and he carried Bertha's largest parcel in addition to Mary's smallest, without any apparent consciousness as to which was which.

In consequence he was a dear; and as he made no parley over whatever he was asked to do, never had an engagement, never sought out an excuse—as he submitted to be dragged from house to house with never a remonstrance, and to be kept waiting at shop or rink with never a murmur—he was presently the best of dears.

"And I do say the way that poor Jem is put upon—I shouldn't stand if I was he," cried his stanch protectress Mrs Tufnell. "It is Jem here and Jem there with all of you, till I declare I am quite ashamed. If it was only Mary now, there would be sense in that. But Bertha harries him here, and Emily harries him there——"

"Harries! What to goodness do you mean, mamma?"

—"You know what I mean well enough."

—"There's no such word."

"You know what I *mean* well enough; what does the word matter? I says it's a sin and a shame to keep that poor dear standing about in all the cold doorways in this weather, while you girls are amusing yourselves inside——"

"He won't come inside; it is his own fault; he will stop in the doorways."

"That's nonsense: that's just him all over; he thinks he'll be in the way. There he was to-day—— Oh, I saw you all—I saw you, though none of you saw *me*—and there he was half an hour at

Smith's door if he was a minute. I went by when you three walked up, and saw you—you, Bertha, and Mary go in, and Jem turn back and lean against the wall outside; and when I came back—and I had been away a good half-hour, for I could not have got to the Greens and back in less—he was there still. Now, if it had only been for five minutes or so, shop-windows are well enough for a little while, but—— I was saying shop-windows are diverting enough in their way, Mr Jem," as Challoner entered, "but I doubt the girls give you too much of them. I like to flatten my nose now and again myself, but I never get a chance nowadays; there's so much to be done, and papa likes to keep the horses going. That's the worst of horses: I am sure I don't care to drive, drive, drive every day of my life; I'd as soon stop indoors to look after things sometimes. But papa says the horses and James are best out; and the girls are none of them for the carriage—it's not amusing for young people; they can't see their friends, leastways stop and chat and look about them, as they can when they are on their feet; so I have just got into the way of it, and James comes round every day at two o'clock regularly."

"Jem had better drive with you, mamma, if you think it would be more to his taste than being with us," suggested Jem's *fiancée*, with ready pertness. "No doubt your society would divert him much more than ours."

"We don't want him if he don't want us," added her sister.

"And as to our keeping him at the shop-doors, it was about his own errand we were in at Smith's; he will not take any sort of trouble about it himself——"

"About what?"

"His Turk's dress; his dress for the ball. He is going as a Turk. We have settled it for him; we think he will make a lovely Turk. Do be quiet, Jem; I'm not saying it's you that is lovely. And the ball is coming on, and yet he has never given the order!"

"But you have given it?"

"No, indeed. I only went in to see Smith on the sly. Jem never knew what I was about until this moment," looking at him to see the effect; "and Smith says he could manage it perfectly, if Jem would only go and speak himself."

"Well, he must go then—go at once," cried her mother, won over to the enemy directly. "Dear me, Mr Jem! what have you been about? Lord! you may be thrown out altogether! Why now, do look about you, and don't leave it to the last, as you men always do. I met Willie Dobb just now, and for all he was the one to set the ball agoing, he makes believe now that he is too great a gentleman to know anything about it. Says I to him, 'Well, Mr Willie, and what are you to be?' 'Oh, Mrs Tufnell,' says he, as grand as you please, 'I haven't made up my mind yet,' he says. 'I shall just leave it to my tailor,' says he. Leave it to his tailor! a likely story! By-and-by it leaks out that he has got it all as pat as ninepence. 'I may have something of this kind,' he says—but I am sure I forget what kind; and though he is so fine and so fashionable, I'll be bound Willie Dobb has thought of little else but what he can do to set himself off since ever the ball was first talked about."

"I wish Jem would," said Mary. "He only laughs, and says if the worst comes to the worst, he can wear a mask."

("He wears that already," said

Challoner, under his breath.) "Oh, don't you fear, don't you fear," responded the easy mother; "Jem is just tantalising you for a bit of mischief. He and Willie Dobb are a couple. The end will be that the two of them will turn out the smartest there."

"I met Walter Moss to-day,—what do you think he is going as?" said Bertha. "You will never guess. Richard Cœur-de-Lion, in a complete suit of chain-armour. He says he ordered it the very day he got his invitation. Think of Walter Moss as Richard Cœur-de-Lion!"

"Think of the cost of it!" said her mother. "Well, I am not one to grudge money—and to be sure the Mosses are rolling, as one may say; but that chain-armour—and he would never think of having it on hire. Well, well," nodding her head. "And what is Charlotte to be, Bertha?"

"A haymaker, with a rake and a basket. And won't she look like one? With her red face——"

—"Come, come, no ill-nature; we are all in the same boat," said Mrs Tufnell, comfortably; "and a red face is what every haymaker gets with working in the sun. Charlotte is very sensible not to be above the character. I was afraid of what Charlotte might do, to own the truth. Mary Queen of Scots, or suchlike."

"Miss Beadel is to be Mary Queen of Scots, you know. Charlotte could not run in couples with Miss Beadel."

"Miss Beadel, Mary Queen of Scots!" cried her mother, upsetting in her amazement her tea into her saucer, and by a violent lunge just saving farther mischance. "My word! Bertha, you are hoaxing. Ain't you, then? Well, I wouldn't have believed it. Ridiculous creature; and at her age

too! As yellow as a guinea, and as lean as a fiddle-string! Set her up with a velvet dress and pearls!"

"It is her old velvet that is to be made to do," said Bertha, giggling. "And she says *that* is why she has chosen the character. She is going to cut down the neck——"

——"Humph!" from her mother.

"And put in hanging sleeves of muslin——"

——"Ay, they are cheap enough."

"And work in the pearls herself—old Roman pearls that she has lying by. And she has got a wire frame to stand up at the back, and it is to be covered with muslin and pearls to match; like the photograph, you know. She has the photograph in front of her to work by, and she is really doing it very well."

"And what about the head? The head is the touch. She is never going to make up the cap herself?"

"Indeed she is then. And I have promised to look in and tell her how it does when it is finished," said Bertha, with all the family good-nature. "She is not going to have a stitch put into anything by anybody but herself; and she reckons the whole thing will only cost her fifteen shillings, gloves and all."

"And me paying more than that in guineas! But however," said Mrs Tufnell, recovering—"however, I am not Martha Beadel; and as I have a husband who stints me for nothing,—for I will say that for papa, he has been handsome to us all this time,—well, I'll not disgrace him. 'Tis all very well for Martha Beadel to cut and chop her old gowns and try to make them pass for new ones; but it would be a pretty thing if I were to play that trick. Don't

you tell papa, girls, whatever you do," in alarm; "do you hear that, Mary? Don't you let out to papa about Miss Beadel getting nothing new for the ball: we should never hear the last of it."

"Papa is quite as full of his own appearance as other people," said Mary. "Everybody is but Jem," with a glance of resentment. "Every one takes an interest in it; and the Dobbs are so beset with requests for invitations, from people wanting to bring other people, that Mrs Dobb says it is of no use—their rooms cannot go on stretching for ever; and though they are going to turn every stick of furniture out of the place, and use all the down-stairs rooms, they cannot take in another soul. There is a Miss Juliet Appleby——"

An involuntary movement from Challoner.

"Oh, you know her, Jem?"

"I have—have met her; yes. I know *a* Miss Appleby at least; it may not be the same."

"Was her name Juliet?"

"Juliet?" He looked as though trying to recollect, and blushed for himself as he did so.

"Well, was she a friend of the Windlasses—those people your sister knows?"

"The people my sister knows. Really," said Challoner, affecting to laugh, "really that is rather a wide surface to work upon. I know the Windlasses a little myself; but I did not know they were acquainted with Miss Appleby, nor that she was here with them," which was true enough.

This was his first intimation as to where Juliet was, since, although he had come across her once or twice after the lecture, he had not been obliged to speak. He did not think she had seen him. Once indeed they had almost touched each other beneath an archway, and as by a

chance he had been alone, he had almost made himself known for the purpose of discovering how much or how little she had learned about him. But the stake was too high; he had hung back, and let her walk along in front of him—only a few feet in front of him—for a quarter of a mile, leaving it to chance whether they should fall foul of each other or not. Chance had elected that they should not, that time.

Then, again, he had seen her step out of a brougham and enter a shop—the next shop to one in whose doorway he was waiting as usual—and he had thought Juliet could hardly have avoided seeing and recognising him on that occasion; but she had: she had passed inside, and ere she had emerged again he had vanished. The third glimpse had been merely of the top of her bonnet. But he had remembered the bonnet as having been one which Matilda had noticed and had not admired. Teddy had defended poor Juliet's tawdry taste; but Teddy's defence was never good for much, and Challoner had joined in the laugh: now the sight of the sprightly plume in the streets of Clinkton sent a throb to his heart.

He had almost grown callous as to the proximity of Juliet herself;

that she had not her stopping-place anywhere close at hand had soon been obvious, and he could have heard with satisfaction that she was with the old-fashioned out-of-the-way Windlasses, had it not been for this insufferable fancy ball.

"Well, she wants an invitation now," said Mary. "The Dobbs and the Windlasses do not visit. Mrs Dobb says she does not know why she is sure, but they never have left cards on each other, and so, of course, she had never thought of asking them. But this Miss Appleby is dying to be there on Friday. So she has got the Greens to ask for her, and she is to come with their party."

"Provided Mrs Dobb will have her, I suppose."

"Oh, Mrs Dobb makes an exception in her favour, of course," said Mary, laughing. "Mrs Dobb will go on making exceptions for a good while yet, you may be sure. And she is as proud as possible of being so run upon; she would not turn away a sweep, let alone Miss Juliet Appleby!"

"Harry Swilly is going as a Chinaman," began Bertha. It was endless. Cold and raw as the day was, Challoner went out of doors again; he really could not stand more at one time.

CHAPTER XXII.—CHALLONER PLAYS HIS PART.

"If, when she appears i' the room,
Thou dost not quake, art not struck dumb,
And in striving this to cover,
Dost not speak thy words twice over,—
Know this,
Thou lov'st amiss,
And to love true,
Thou must begin again, and love anew."

—SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

Nothing was now heard but of the fancy ball from morning till night. Everybody professed curiosity and anxiety as regarded the dresses and characters chosen by

their friends, and everybody had a very real and unaffected interest in, and desire to make known, their own.

"What are you to wear? What

are you to be?" was the inevitable first question, followed by a careless "Very pretty. Very nice. That will just suit you. I am going as —," entering into the minutest details. No age nor sex was exempt from the infection; no one was too old or too young, or too wise or too fine (excepting Willie Dobb, and even Mrs Tufnell saw through him), to care how they went, and how they looked. Heads of families—sober, grey-headed men, who would have to pay the bill afterwards—might indeed put out their lips and raise their eyebrows, but they went and got measured all the same, and did not above half like being told that the fly-away coat-tails and tight breeches in the corner were for the *young* gentlemen, and that something more suitable would be forthcoming for them; whilst their portly spouses whispered merrily behind fans, spread their fingers to show the breadth of the lace on their trains, and threw up their eyes in describing the height of the plumes that were to nod upon their powdered curls.

It appeared that there were to be two Harry the Eighths, three ill-fated Marys of Scotland, a Joan of Arc, a Cleopatra, a William Penn, several Puritans, and at least half-a-dozen Vivandières. "And what do you think those barrack gimcracks are going to do?" cried Tufnell, in disgust indescribable. "Going in their uniform! In *their* uniform! The uniform of the 150th, if you please. And Mrs Dobb may lay her account to it that every one of the hundred and fifty of them will be there, now that it is not to cost them so much as a clean shirt. It is a clever get-out, isn't it, Challoner? Poor devils! they haven't a brass farthing among 'em."

Mary Tufnell had in duty

bound consulted her Jem on the all-important subject. He had been in luck: he had chanced to remember a dress that had struck his fancy on a similar occasion, and by describing it,—a plain black gown, with white cap, apron, and collar, and red cross on the left arm—the costume of a hospital nurse, in short,—he had been saved further discussion; for "What do you think she did?" cried her delighted mother, afterwards; "she just went and ordered it straight away, and surprised him with it on in the drawing-room! I'm bound to say it's neat; but 'tis scarce dressy enough, to my taste. If one is to be dressed up, you know—but, however, if it pleases Jem. And was it not nice of Mary? And Jem has hit off her pretty back and waist for certain. Herbert, now, could not think of anything but a Dolly Varden for poor Emily. I call that common. And papa standing treat for the girls, and ready to pay anything, as it will be the last time—for two of them any way. They should have been allowed to get something better than Dolly Vardens out of papa."

But though the accidental mention of an effective costume did something for Challoner's reputation, and just saved him from being said to take *no* interest in the event of the day—and though this suggestion was, we may add, assiduously circulated in the circle as an apology for Mary's plainness, and also out of justice to papa, added Mrs Tufnell—still he might have been in disgrace again soon enough, had it not been for what he had just heard regarding Juliet Appleby. Within twenty-four hours after learning her intentions, he had given strict and lavish orders about his own dress. It was to be made at once, and made in the best style, and all past

remissness was condoned on the spot.

But lest our readers should be under any misapprehension on the subject, we may just inform them aside, that this sudden awakening meant precisely the reverse of what appeared,—that as long as Challoner saw no escape from the dreadful revel—nothing for it but to be led there a captive at the wheels of his fair—the doleful vision so oppressed him, that he was perforce numb and nerveless beforehand; but that no sooner did he resolve *not* to go to the ball—no sooner did he gather himself together to revolt and flee—than he went gaily to the tailor's.

Do not be too hard upon him: he was almost beside himself.

A note had come for him in the morning from Lord Overton—Lord Overton, who scarcely ever asked his sister for a stamp. He had himself written to Challoner, and the missive had arrived at breakfast-time. There had been but a few words:—

“DEAR CHALLONER,—The frost has come at last, and we are keeping the home ponds for you. Come to-morrow, if you can. If not, next day. Yours truly.—OVERTON.”

“Come to-morrow, if you can.” If—you—can?—ay, there was the rub. “To-morrow” was the day on which he got the invitation; and though he had told the writer that such an invitation would bring him at any time, on however short a notice, he had paused until he had heard about Miss Appleby; then he had ordered his suit. With Overton's note in his pocket he had walked to the shop, done his own errand, and then accompanied the ladies on theirs. He had never been more gentle, more compliant. They had ventured to consult him about the

rouge for their cheeks, and the juice wherewith to stain his own skin; and he had responded to every summons, and started up to execute every desire in a way that quite wrung Mrs Tufnell's soft withers, who now frankly allowed that she had never done that poor dear justice before—no, that she had not; for, much as she had always thought of Mary's Jem, she had just felt, felt a little lately as if he were coming it Willie Dobb over them, and had thought he might have tried to look a little more as if he cared about what pleased them all so much,—and, to be sure, everybody knew that Willie Dobb *did* care, in spite of his fal-la airs; but the worst of Mr Jem was, she really had been afraid he did *not*,—and that was the honest truth. But, dear, now she felt quite reproved; and indeed she had owned as much to papa, who had said—what do you think he had said? Why, that he only thought the more of Jem for not being carried away by tomfoolery. “‘Had he been one of those jackanapes of officers,’ says papa—for you know papa never could stand the officers,—‘had he been one of *them*,’ says papa, ‘you would have seen another story.’ Papa is quite mad with them for going in their red coats, poor things; but what else have they got to go in, say I? It is all very well for papa, who has only to put his hand in his pocket,—but we can't all be like him; and, for my part, I think none the worse of the young men for saving a penny. However, Jem pleases papa best, and that is as it should be, you know.”

“I suppose you have heard what they are going to do with me,” said papa himself, presently. “It has come in just now, the finery, and there are no fewer than three

boxes! Three boxes! The half of my dressing-room is taken up with them, and a whipper-snapper of a tailor is coming to-night to see that I am all right. 'Pon my word, I shall feel monstrous queer, I expect. What do you say, eh? How about the Turk? Will you be at home in your filigree? Will you be able to dance?"

"I am not a dancing man. No, I don't suppose I shall be dancing to-morrow night," replied Challoner, looking down with something like a smile on his face, as he made an inward interpretation of the phrase.

"You leave it to the boys and girls? Quite right too. Much room they will get to flounce about in, however, if what young Dobb tells me is true; over a hundred people, and their rooms are very little larger than our own. They have a goodish-sized hall—that will help them. If we go in time to see the rest arrive, that will be the best of the fun, to my fancy. I told Dobb we should be there early; we are old friends of the Dobbs, you know"—(how often had he been told it!)"—"their very oldest friends, I may say. Dobb and I have known each other these thirty years, and there has never been a word between us. You can't say that of all old neighbours. I fancy my girls knew of this ball before anybody else did; the girls and boys have all grown up together, and how we have had no match between 'em," with a laugh, "I don't understand. Saw too much of each other, perhaps. People will say my daughters set their caps higher. You, Mr Challoner, and Herbert Mildmay, are above the Clinkton folks: yes, you are—I don't mind owning it. I'm no truckler; but when a man behaves like a gentleman—as you have done to me and mine, sir—an

honest, downright, straightforward gentleman,—damn it, I'm not above saying your birth is higher than mine. You did not come after my girl's money, you came after her for herself; so has Herbert come after Emily for herself: I believe in you both, from my soul. You shall see that I do by-and-by—by-and-by," rustling with both hands in his pockets. "And as for the Dobbs, why, they are all very well in their way,—very well as neighbours, very well as friends; but between ourselves," wrinkling up his nose—"between ourselves, Jem Challoner, I am just as well pleased to have it stop there. To be sure, there's Bertha," suddenly—

—"What about Bertha?" said Mrs Tufnell, entering.

"Only talking over the ball, my dear," rejoined he, placidly.

"Arranging how we are to go; are you? Oh, we have thought of that, and Bertha has promised to be dressed and off in time to let the carriage come back again for the other two and Mr Jem;—it is so short a way, the carriage can go back and forward,—and it will come for us, for you and me, last."

"But we must be in good time," cried Tufnell, "mind you: I have promised that we shall be in good time; for I have set my heart—ahem—the Dobbs are particularly anxious that we should be the first arrivals, and take up our position among themselves, and see it all. Dobb told me so himself."

"You see papa is quite full of it," nodded his spouse to Challoner.

"Oh, pooh! I? I full of it? Nonsense! I—I only care, as it amuses you. I am glad to do the civil thing by the Dobbs, my old friends the Dobbs, as I was telling

Jem here just now. I am always glad to see them, they are always glad to see me; but as for their fancy ball, it is neither here nor there. If they choose to give a ball, very well; I have nothing to say; let 'em give it. Dobb knows what the length of his purse is; and if he likes to give his young people a hop, and invites us to join, I, for one, see no harm in it; and though I am an old man, and my dancing days are over——”

——“Oh now, now, we shall see what that means; oh now, now, don't believe him, Mr Jem,” cried his wife, delightedly. “Don't be too sure; I should not be the least bit in the world surprised if papa was asked to open the ball with Mrs Dobb. There! That is what I have thought all along; and you may say what you please, it is in my mind that that is how it is to be. Papa and Mrs Dobb! I am sure I only hope that Mr Dobb will not want me to stand up with him; for really with that great gown—what with the length of it, and the weight of it—I am sure I could never turn a figure.”

“Oh come, old lady, you would curtsy with the best of 'em,” rejoined her husband, gallantly. “Upon my word I had never thought of it, but I should not wonder in the least if Dobb has this in his head. Either you or one of the girls——”

“Ay, one of the girls would be far better, and so I shall tell him. It would be a compliment to the Windlasses if he were to take out Miss Juliet Appleby.”

“And why should they have the compliment?” demanded her husband, somewhat tartly. “The Windlasses have never done anything to merit a compliment from any one of us, so far as I know. It seems to me they hold themselves above us plain folks; and if

that's the case, I should show them and their Miss Juliet Appleby that we can do without them. Did you not say that they are not even coming themselves, but are sending this London miss with other people?”

“Is she a London miss, Jem?” inquired his daughter Mary, who had entered a few minutes previously.

“You know her, eh, Jem?” added the father, who had not heard this before; “you know her? oh! And you know the Windlasses, too, of course? Of course, I forgot. But you'll take no offence; I daresay they are excellent people. I never heard a word against 'em; but socially, you know, socially, they are not my style. You see it differently, of course; you are of their set; and no doubt they make themselves agreeable enough to you, however high and mighty they may be to us. When Mary is your wife, she will stand by the county folks too, I dare swear,” pinching her ear; “but you see, I am a plain man, and if people will take me as I am, I am neighbourly; but if they are too fine for anything but a nod, and a ‘How are you?’ as if I was their grocer or their baker, and talk of nothing but the *weather* when they come to the bank, and won't visit me in my own house, nor know my wife and daughters, why, I don't like it, and I don't pretend to like it. And as for this London miss——”

——“But *is* she a London miss, Jem?” said Mary, again.

——“What she should trouble her head about our ball for, I cannot imagine,” proceeded Mr Tuffnell, without a pause. “Can't she get balls enough in London without running after them down here, asking for invitations, and taking up other girls' partners? I

suppose you will have to ask her"—to Challoner—"as she is a lady you know; you will have to ask her once, but I should not put myself out of my way to do it twice. Let her take her chance; let her fare as the other girls do; why should we trouble ourselves about a stranger who has nothing to do with any of us? The Windlasses not even coming with her, and Jem here the only friend she has——"

Jem laughed; he could not help it.

"Eh?" said the banker, amazed.

"My acquaintance with Miss Appleby, sir, is so slight that it is not worth mentioning, I met her in the autumn at a house where I was pheasant-shooting. She is not likely to—to——"

"——To remember you?"

"To care to remember me. She has cut me dead twice in the street."

CHAPTER XXIII.—HE WOULD BE SOMEWHERE ELSE ON THE NIGHT OF THE BALL.

"Drawne with the powre of an heart-robbing eye,
And wrapt in fetters of a golden tresse."

—SPENSER.

Six young ladies have been introduced to the reader in these pages, six ordinary, average, unremarkable, almost undistinguishable young ladies, all in the bloom of first youth, and none as yet giving promise of any lasting attraction when that bloom should have passed away. Yet, although all six might have been culled at random from the ranks of cheerful rosy faces one meets with every day, each had her own individual trait, which, if it could scarcely amount to a "redeeming vice," still served to mark her out to the student of character. Thus Lotta Hanwell was an important fool, whom the severest shock to her vanity would not have awakened to the fact that she was not of first-rate consequence in the eyes of the world. Mary Tufnell was a poor wit, who had long depended on the laugh of her friends. Emily, less endowed with animal life, clung to the romantic and sentimental. Bertha romped; while of the remaining two, Marion Appleby was a benevolent blunderer, who with the best intentions frequently

did and said the wrong thing; and Juliet—but Juliet is the only one of the set who deserves more than this passing attention.

Juliet, to begin with, was not quite what she appeared to be. There was a little deep corner in her shallow mind, and in that depth there lurked a seed of power which none of her fellows possessed, and which but few suspected,—and it was the detection of this ability for mischief, this capacity for undertaking it and enjoyment of it, which made the youngest Miss Appleby just worth notice in the eyes of the proud and penetrating Matilda.

She had been by times scornfully amused by Juliet's wiles; she was not afraid of either brother being beguiled by them.

And Juliet was useful at the Hall, and she came with her hair nicely brushed back behind her ears, and her simple frock tied in with a ribbon, and a string of coral round her neck; and she would hang so lovingly upon her dear Lady Matilda's arm, and sit at her feet, and lay her cheek upon

her knee, and be so childish and fond and confiding, that the only wonder was she had not long before the period at which she first came under our notice been turned into the pet she desired to be. But Matilda wanted no pet, and hardly knew what to do with so much affection; she suffered her young friend,—up to a certain point she preferred her, which she ought not to have done, to the blunter and duller and truer Marion; but she did not trouble her head much about the Applebys, unless it were to summon them to perform a service or assist at a ceremony. That done, she would call the pair good girls, and commend them much as if they had been her waiting-maids, and presently she would toss them a favour in her imperial careless way; but as for making a companion of either miss, telling either one her thoughts, sharing with either her pursuits, Lady Matilda once owned with the special and startling candour with which she at times allowed home truths to Teddy, that she would as soon seek for a kindred spirit in her daughter: Lotta was at least on a par with the Applebys.

For mediocrity was just what this naughty Matilda could not tolerate; and having been endowed by heaven with beauty and talent enough to have satisfied a score of women if shared among them, she must needs jeer at those whom—who can tell?—she had perchance herself robbed.

It was shameful; and little Miss Appleby—Juliet, you understand—who was so fond of dear Lady Matilda to everybody round, and who could hardly keep away from dear Lady Matilda four days out the five if the Hall were occupied,—Juliet, in spite of her admiration for everything said and done by her friend, was sometimes so spleen-

ful and indignant that she could scarce contain herself, when time after time it proved that the youthful grandmother, still in her charms triumphant, drew to herself, and away from the pink-and-white daisies, the budding beauties of the neighbourhood—every man, old or young, who appeared on the scene. It was atrocious, it was more than feminine patience could stand, to see how one and another would, on pretexts the most trivial, steal into the magic circle which invariably formed around Matilda—to mark their efforts to obtain her notice, their joy beneath a word or smile of kindness; and never, perhaps, had this been more keenly felt by Juliet Appleby than on that November night when she and her sister had been summoned to meet Robert Hanwell's friends, Mr Whewell and Mr Challoner, who were hers and Marion's by right, and upon whom, could she have made an impression—even a decent impression—she might have made Teddy Lessingham blink his eyes and bestir himself to escape from his sister's dominion and lay hand and heart at her feet. But Whewell had only paid her a few stock compliments over the piano, and that apparently out of the mere superfluity of his good-humour with an evening so delightfully and exclusively given up to Matilda; while Challoner had as good as turned his back upon her, his partner, during dinner, and had never come near her afterwards;—and although he could not have been said to have then and there entered the lists with the gay barrister, no one knew better than Juliet Appleby how effectually he had made up for lost time afterwards.

She had bitten her lip from mortification more than once subsequently, when, ordered up to the

Hall, she had found herself a mere lay figure at the entertainment, expected to talk and eat and behave properly and see nothing, while Challoner hung over Matilda's chair, and murmured in her ear, and gazed into her face.

She had been there one afternoon late, when Matilda had been playing to herself on the organ in the dim old gallery, and Matilda had been at no pains to bid her stay; but she had stayed in spite of this and almost in spite of herself,—stayed to see and spy. Challoner had come in presently. He had come in wet, tired, torn by thickets, and splashed with mud and mire, his shabby shooting clothes still on, hung round with shot and powder belts,—just as he was, in short, only having left his gun outside,—and he had taken off his cap, showing the disordered hair beneath in dark moist rings over his brow, and had sat down to listen, leaning his rough cheek on his hand, while a soft undisguised emotion stole over his face; and as he had sat there in the half light, his broad shoulders lounging forwards, a humble, subdued, overmastered giant, he had looked a captive whom any woman might have been proud to win.

He had looked a captive, every inch a captive, too. None but a lover durst have sat where he sat, done as he did, come in as he had come. He had not spoken much, and Matilda had played softly on; but Juliet had left them thus, and she had left with a sting at her own heart. She, too, could have liked Jem Challoner,—and he had hardly seemed to know that she was there.

Her astonishment on hearing of his engagement to Mary Tufnell only a few hours before she saw him in the lecture-room at Clington—for of course she saw him,

and saw that he saw her—may be imagined. Astonishment had at first been everything; then came deeper and deeper mortification, lastly malice. He had been an engaged man, and yet he had dared to trifle with Lady Matilda Wilmot. Oh, how deeply must he have been in love to have so dared!

All else must have gone to the winds while he gave free play to his unlawful passion, and now doubtless he was here to break off the match and then return to Overton, to be received there with open arms. The horrid man—it was just like him. She hated the sight of his great big back as she sat behind it, pretty close behind it, during Herbert Mildmay's lecture; she hated to remember how often she had seen it pass and repass along the terraces at Overton Hall. Then she had had a sight of the wretch's face, and seen that it was the same stony stick of a face that had been on view the first night at the Overtons' dinner-party—not the face that had subsequently grown under Matilda's hands—and all at once she had resolved not to see it this time. No, she would not seem to see him, would not speak to him until she had given her home-thrust,—but she would write to Lady Matilda that very night.

Prudence, however, intervened. Supposing that Lady Matilda already knew, no good would be gained; supposing she did not, she would certainly not like Juliet Appleby the better for telling her. Besides, it would be delightful to lie in wait and see all she could of Challoner, and hear all that was to be heard of his doings, and then, *then* confront him before Mary Tufnell, and inquire, in a way that could not be mistaken, after his friend Lady Matilda Wilmot. The day after the lecture every one

knew about the fancy ball, and it was at this fancy ball that Miss Appleby decided to make her great scene. The very next day to that on which it was to be given, she purposed returning south, and would then have the felicity of breaking the news to Matilda with all the surprise, and veiled sympathy, and delicate assumption of her auditor's indifference, that was appropriate and respectful. She would be able to say that she had been presented to the future Mrs Challoner—that she had congratulated him, and that he had been forced to accept her congratulation; and she had seen herself saying this with a troubled and distressed face, and had also beheld a troubled distressed face averted from her as she spoke.

It was worth waiting for, this fancy ball.

Go to it she must—she liked fancy balls; and to go with a mysterious purpose, with a design on the peace of three several persons—to go with a knife under her glove and a leer under her mask—gave a zest to the promised evening, the like of which she had never had before. Short as the intervening time was, it seemed even longer to Juliet Appleby than it did to Jem Challoner.

All of these good people were thus, we see, playing their own game.

Challoner, whose hand was the worst, was becoming more and more reckless as time went on; and having got over his first fright on meeting Miss Appleby, and finding that she did not intend to recognise him under present circumstances, he made up his mind that all was yet unknown to her, and that she was merely revenging herself for previous neglect. She was now with the better sort of people, he with the worse; and it seemed to him that the ridiculous idea that

he would have been glad now to claim an acquaintance he had previously despised, had incited her to turn up her nose and turn away her head from him.

It was charming; he was delighted with Juliet: Lord Overton's little note, which lay snug and safe in his breast-pocket, would assuredly never have been penned had she sent the tidings flying south. It was plain, it was as clear as day, that she had not heard a syllable, and the reason for such ignorance was seen in the charge laid by Mr Tufnell to her hosts the Windlasses; and—and such being the case, the devil returned to tempt Challoner. The night of the ball was near, and Miss Juliet was to be there. So,—he would be elsewhere.

She should not see him attached to Mary Tufnell's red cross and black gown that merry evening.

Up to this hour he had been going drearily and dutifully on with what he had to do; he had been walking in a plain path, and, though he had been unhappy, he had been able to keep his unhappiness to himself, and even to take some sort of comfort in the hope that he was at least giving no present cause of offence to an innocent girl or her relations. Even in his heart he had not given way to an unkind, or an unjust, or an unmanly thought; he had not allowed himself to fret, or to mock, or to swear; but he had risen, morning by morning, wondering languidly what the day would bring forth—how soon the blow would fall, and his fate be sealed.

Any post might bring him the cool line from Overton which should ring his knell in its congratulations and good wishes; and accordingly every postman's rap sent the blood faster through his pulses, especially when, as happened more than once,

his eye caught a glimpse of a cornered envelope among the budget brought in by the servant, and he knew as by instinct for whom it came, long before Tufnell's slow solemn voice read out, "James Challoner, Esq.," and handed the missive up the table. It would be from Teddy, of course. When Overton wrote, he contented himself with the nearest half-sheet handy; even Matilda was not particular, unless she happened to be in a stately mood; but Teddy never used any but the best paper and the biggest envelopes, and he was always glad to show off his excellent handwriting, and make the most of his correspondence. He said he wrote the best hand in the family, as indeed he did; but Matilda appealed to Challoner, and of course he stood by her. He never saw his own name now in that bold free caligraphy without thinking of this. The scrap of paper whereon the brother and sister had contested, their beautiful faces and mirthful voices as they did so, all came before him as often as he opened a fresh envelope, and he would for the next few seconds hear nothing of what was passing in the room—not, indeed, until he could draw one short breath of relief when assured that there was nothing, nothing yet.

The letter would be long, friendly, and full of information—he thought he knew who supplied the information,—and every topic and every reference meant this: "We have not forgotten you. Do not forget us." How dear such an intimation was, how doubly dear as contrasted with what might have been, may be imagined.

Lord Overton's invitation did the rest. Every honest resolution, every worthy aspiration gave way under it; coming as it did on the very day when the report about Miss Appleby's being at the ball was confirmed, it was too much; Challoner went straight out and ordered the dress he did not mean to wear. One was ready, needing only a few slight alterations, and it could be sent in the same evening; and the gentleman professed himself satisfied,—and was so, after his own fashion.

Yes, he would give the ball the slip, plausibly. No one would guess that anything of the kind could have been his intention when the gorgeous suit had actually come in, and when his good hostess would have only seen afresh what a couple he and Willie Dobb had been. He would be off before any one was stirring in the morning, called away by business,—it seemed he was always being called away by business now; but on this occasion his departure would be easy—he would have nothing to say, and no one to see him go; he would merely leave a note of explanation, and then—then he would be somewhere else on that frosty night than in Mrs Dobb's smart vestibule. His hand shook, and his eye glowed beneath his dark brows as he told himself where he would be, and with whom. No news could now reach Overton before he did; and once there, he might yet keep Matilda ignorant, might yet free himself, might yet—oh, he could not think of what he might not yet do, once he had broken loose, had awakened from the nightmare of the past fortnight.

CHAPTER XXIV.—TIME PASSES.

"The wheel of life no less will stay
In a smooth than rugged way."

—COWLEY.

So much for the man ; now for the woman.

Very quietly, not unhappily, Matilda's days passed. Memory, on the one hand, supplied pleasant themes, which Hope, on the other, whispered would soon return ; she doubted nothing, and feared nothing. Challoner's abrupt departure had, truth to tell, charmed her more with him than anything else could have done ; and the conviction that it only remained with herself to summon him back at any moment, rendered her able to support her dignity and pass the time of his absence without much inward, and without any apparent, weariness.

Her schools, her poor people, her brothers, even her daughter, had plenty of her company, and benefited by her cheerfulness. There was a poor woman who was sick, several miles away from Overton ; Matilda visited her every day, read to her, sang to her, brightened and cheered her dingy little room,—almost made her forget her pain. The boys in her Sunday class were troublesome ; she made no complaint of them, she won them over by patience and forbearance. The good rector of the parish was more devoted to her ladyship than ever. He had always said the earl was a model of a gentleman, and his sister an excellent, charitable, practical Christian, — not what you could call profoundly pious, not perhaps a very deeply thinking woman, but one who was always to be found on the right side, whose heart was in the right place, and who, he believed, would grow in grace as she advanced in life. If we are to be known by our fruits,

the worthy speaker would proceed, he wished all his parishioners had as good fruits to show as Lady Matilda Wilmot. Her conduct to her brother now—he did not refer to Overton—the way she managed that young Lessingham, was beyond praise. A wild young fellow, and scarcely more than half-witted, he was going to the bad as fast as he could go when his sister took him in hand. Lucky for him it was her being a widow,—and scarcely any other kind of a widow would have done. Why, she was as good as a young fellow for Teddy ; she rode with him, walked with him, played billiards with him, amused him, and kept him out of mischief from morning to night. She brought him to church, too, regularly,—brought him twice in the day ; whereas until she came he had never, or hardly ever, been inside a place of worship since he was a boy.

People talked of Lady Matilda's marrying again. That was all nonsense. Poor thing ! she had had enough of marriage,—given over, when she was a mere child, to a selfish old cur, who had made her life miserable. She would think twice before she burnt her fingers a second time. There was that Mr Challoner. To be sure Mr Challoner had been hanging about for a considerable time ; and he must own that just for a short space—for a very short space—he had had his suspicions. Certainly Mr Challoner had seemed very intimate, and he was a fine-looking man, not too young ; but oh, there was nothing in it—nothing in it. Lady Matilda was a lively woman, who made herself pleasant without

meaning it (he would not have said she flirted for the world); and here was a proof that it was as he said, in MrChalloner's having taken himself off, and all going on as before at the Hall. Lady Matilda had been down at the rectory the day before, and everybody there had remarked that she was quite in her usual bright spirits, full of the Christmas charities and Christmas decorations, and not even inclined to grumble at the frost, which compelled her to forego her favourite exercise and go about on foot.

Very little inclined to grumble, indeed, had Matilda been; that frost had another meaning for her than going about on foot; it meant Overton's despatch, and it was all that was wanted in the way of an excuse for the same. After being at the rectory, hearing and entering into all the arrangements there, and paying a long and friendly visit, the fair pedestrian found herself still with half the afternoon on her hands, Teddy being busy at the skating-ponds, which were to be cleared, swept, and tidied, in view of the approaching Christmas Eve. That Christmas Eve, it must be remarked, was the evening of the Clinkton festivity; and it was also to be signalled at Overton Hall: Challoner had telegraphed that he could not come the same day, but would be with them on that following,—it had been at once and unanimously decided that the home ponds should not be skated upon until he came.

"I had better go on to Endhill," concluded Lady Matilda, as she emerged from the rectory; "I may as well see Lotta to-day, as perhaps she may have to complain of me by-and-by," with a little smile. "It is really a good thing Lotta is so near," her thoughts ran on; "it is pleasant to be able to see her and the dear baby whenever I like;

and if she lived further off, I fear I should go but seldom. Teddy dislikes it so much: that is another reason for going to-day. I don't like taking poor Teddy where he does not wish to go. And he—not Teddy this time—he dislikes it, too. Well, well, they are men, and must be humoured, I suppose; we women always do have to take the disagreeables in this life on to our own shoulders. Now, of course, I like going to see Lotta, but then I hate just as much as they do going to see Robert——" and here she caught sight of Robert, and had no more time for reflections—the reflections, you will understand, having twirled and twisted, and run in and out of her brain as she walked, so that she was still harping on the one idea, with all its multifarious variations, when she turned in at the cottage-drive.

Robert was in the garden, busy with some projected alterations, and his companion, whom he was consulting and advising, and explaining to, was Lotta. Lotta loved to consult.

"If you ask me, Robert, I should not go quite so far along the wall. That is the only thing. All the rest would be perfect. You are such a good planner——"

"You see I have thought it out thoroughly, my dear. You may be right about its being too far; but I doubt it. However, I will consider your opinion."

"Oh, my opinion," she thought it only second to his—"my opinion is really worth very little, I am afraid, Robert. *You* know; of course, *I*—I only say what I think; this is not my department——"

"To be sure not; but I am always glad to hear what you have to say. When one gives one's whole attention to a thing, however, as I have done to this—— Ah, Lady

Matilda," as she walked up, "who would have thought of seeing you to-day? You have not ridden, of course. Uncle Edward with you? Pray come in and rest. Lotta, my dear——"

——"And without your hat, Lotta; do you want to catch a cold?" said Lady Matilda, kissing her daughter. "It is not summer, though the sun is shining, and——"

"You are often without yours, mamma."

"I am different. I am not a catch-coldy person, and I have a thicker mop of hair," said Lady Matilda, frankly. "Besides which, I don't know that you ever saw me sitting out of doors in a sharp frost with a bare head."

"I had only sat down for a moment."

"But your mother is certainly right, my dear," said Robert; "I ought to have thought of that, if you did not. I will get your hat at once," and he was starting off.

"No; stop; let me go myself," said Lotta, rising somewhat heavily, for Lotta had not grown thinner since we saw her last. "You are busy, Robert, and I have nothing to do. Let me go."

"Not at all. Stay where you are. I am never busy if you need me," rejoined he, heartily. "I am only sorry that I did not notice before that you required a hat. Lady Matilda, the wheelbarrow will dirty your dress; allow me." He drew it aside, and passed on to the house. As he did so, he did not seem nearly so ridiculous as usual: Matilda felt no inclination to scoff, and looked after the retreating figure with a sensation that was almost new.

He was a poor specimen of a man, this Robert, but was he not a good husband? What would it be like to have even such a husband—one who would spontaneous-

ly avow after more than a year's matrimony that he was never busy if his wife required an attention? And she actually found herself taking note for the future, and with a sense of something like shame for the past, that there might be worse things in the world than an overdrawn politeness, when it was thus carried into the recesses of home-life.

There he was, that long-backed prig, stalking solemnly back, stalking along cheerfully and readily with the precious covering for his precious Lotta's head; and there was she affectionately, if somewhat stolidly, receiving the attention, the two quite taken up with each other for the time being. With a softer feeling at her heart than she could have at all explained, Lady Matilda watched the little scene, marked the little pat on Lotta's shoulder which acknowledged Lotta's thanks, and Lotta's satisfied tranquil reception of the same, as of one used to such kindly treatment,—and then the visitor rather suddenly said she would go indoors.

She would not hear of taking any one else in with her. Lotta had let out that Robert was busy, and her mother could wait till he and Lotta were at liberty. Lotta must stay with him, of course; she was "a help," quite gravely——

"Well, I suppose I am," said Lotta. "At least Robert thinks so. He says he would rather go by what I say than an architect. Of course that is going too far, but I always feel I understand a *little* of these things."

"Which I do not. And so, as I can be of no use——"

——"My dear Lady Matilda! Of no use!——"

——"Of no sort of use. I will just go in by myself, and you shall come when you are ready. Yes,

I will rest, thank you. I have lots of time to stay. Don't hurry. I will go and fetch down baby and have a play with him;" and with a quick step she tripped off merrily towards the house.

Half an hour afterwards, which was the extreme limit Mr Hanwell's decorum would permit of their remaining behind, he and Lotta found her in the drawing-room, sitting on a low seat by the fire, gazing into the embers, with the babe asleep upon her knee.

They stood in front of the window as they passed, and looked in, and spoke, but no one answered, and they could not attract attention by signs.

"Mamma is so absent, she never notices anything when she is in these moods," said Lotta. Then, entering, "Ho, mamma! what are you thinking about, in here? You were quite lost in a day-dream, I should say, just now. Robert and I stood and peeped in at you through the window, — we thought you would have heard us; but we did not tap, for fear of disturbing baby. We thought you would have seen us, but you never looked round."

"The window was shut," said Lady Matilda, curtly.

"We must have darkened the window."

"Perhaps you did."

"And we had a good look at you. Robert said you made quite a pretty picture in the firelight, you and baby. Is he not a dear boy? Look at his little fat arm. How nicely it shows against your dark velvet! Robert said you ought to be painted holding him just like this," attaching full value to the compliment, with a distinct impression that Robert's comments, whether expressed or otherwise, were not always so favourable. "Do you know, mamma, I really

do believe," continued the young matron slowly—"I really do believe that we shall have to short-coat him before the three months are out; I really do."

"Shortcoat Robert?"

"Mamma! of course I meant baby; did I not say baby? but you were not attending."

"Perhaps not, my dear; no, I don't know that I was," said Lady Matilda, calmly.

"But do attend now, for it is really a serious matter. If any one else had suggested it—but Mrs Burrble herself said I must."

"Well, my dear, do it."

"Before the three months are out! And in the depth of winter, in weather like this! Mamma!"

"Well, my dear, don't do it."

"Mamma, you are really—— All I mean is that he grows so tremendously fast, that I don't see how we *can* keep him in his long clothes any longer: he is bursting out of them everywhere; and what to do, I declare I don't know. It is nonsense making new bodies, when he really could wear short things perfectly well; and yet I do not like—indeed I could not, and would not on any account, run the risk of shortcoating in this weather. What do you think?"

"It is difficult to say," observed Lady Matilda, thoughtfully.

But her thoughtfulness was, alas! detected. "I declare, mamma, I don't believe you are thinking a bit about it," cried Lotta, unfortunately on the alert. "I believe you never heard a word I said, and I was going to tell you how nice he looks in your new pelisse," mollified by the recollection; "it is really a beautiful pelisse; and oh, mamma, where can I get that kind of edging on the frock? Nurse says it is much the finest and best she has seen, and it will wash beautifully."

"I am very glad of it."

"Do you know where it could be got? And the flannel—I should like to show you our flannel; I do not feel sure that it is fine enough——"

——"Pray don't, my dear. I—I never did know about flannel and things. And then it is so long ago, and somehow I seem to have—to have lost sight of it all. I love a baby," pressing the infant tenderly to her bosom; "I love this dear little baby very much—but I am afraid I do not care as I ought to do about its clothes," with a smile.

"Oh, but it must be dressed," said Lotta, sententiously. "You would not have it without anything to put on——"

——"Oh yes, I would," laughed her mother.

"Well, you are odd, mamma. But you hold him very nicely," said Lotta, patronisingly. "Do you remember the day Mr Challoner was here—the day before he left—when you would put baby into his arms? How frightened he was! I declare I believe he had never had a baby in his arms before."

"I declare I believe you may be right, my dear." Lady Matilda was bending over the little one, and trying for her own gay tone.

"He was so very awkward."

"So very awkward."

"Mr Whewell took him as handily as possible. But," continued Lotta, astutely, "although Mr Whewell made such a fuss over baby, and gave him a very handsome mug, and said all kinds of civil things, I like Mr Challoner really the best of the two. Mr Whewell grew to be tiresome. It was very good of him to come down, I know, and of course Robert and I were pleased—but he stayed too long, quite too long; and the worst of it is, Robert says he is sure he wants to be asked down again. I should not ask him though, should you?"

"Certainly not," said Lady Matilda, promptly.

"Robert says he believes he will offer. I think we might almost refuse him if he did offer."

"I should."

"Well, I must say I like baby's other godfather the best," concluded Lotta, comfortably.

"Ah, but," said Matilda to herself, as she walked home afterwards,—“but would you say the same, my dear, if baby's other godfather were to be turned into baby's grandfather?"

And the appellation struck her as so delightfully ludicrous that she laughed aloud all by herself on the lonely road.

SALMO-HUCHO FISHING IN BAVARIA.

A RAPID river passes at the foot of the little town of Tölz in Bavaria, on its way to the Black Sea *via* the Danube,—of a deep blue-green colour in fine weather, and white and yeasty-looking in spate. It is but a small river compared with the Danube, yet probably most English children have its name impressed upon their minds long before they hear of the great stream in which its waters are lost. For if you ask them about the Isar, they will tell you of the fiery Huns and furious Franks, the waving banners of Munich, the white graves of the soldiers, and—most of all—how it “rolls rapidly.” It was by poetical licence that Campbell coupled Hohenlinden and the Isar, for the quiet meadows on which the chivalry of Munich charged are some distance from the latter. The Englishman who, at the end of last September, drove through the steep streets of Tölz, and climbed laboriously up towards the mountains in a diligence, forgot all about the dead warriors and their quarrels, and looked at its blue waters solely from a fisherman’s point of view. In ordinary weather it runs swiftly within well-defined banks—no rocks stand up perpetually fretting and fighting with its waves; and if the huge rafts of silver fir, which float down in great numbers, shoot the lashers in safety, they have nothing to fear from running aground on its shingly banks except delay. But in bad weather, after heavy rains, it loses its bright transparent colour, and becomes a furious milky-coloured torrent, carrying down an immense body of sand, with quantities of chips, and logs, and trees, and anything

it can get the grip of, when it encroaches on the land. It spreads out to a breadth of a quarter of a mile, or more, when it can; and the worn grey shingle it has deposited, and the stunted, smothered-looking alders it invades and prevents from flourishing, form rather dreary objects at low water in an otherwise beautiful valley. The shingle runs out in spits, sometimes forming a bar almost across the stream, and so helps to make many fine pools of all sizes, which have generally a rapid, sometimes, alas! a too rapid “tail.” Below the principal dams also there are generally large pools, deep, and often with a strong backwater. The Englishman was on his way to Lenggries, a little village a few miles up the valley, to join a friend, and, in company with him, to wage war on a species of salmon which inhabits these waters. In the still pools, and in the quieter runs, swims a fish called in German *huchen*, the classical name being *Salmo hucho*. He prowls about below the lashers, seeking in the froth for unwary trout, or dace, or insects; and indeed, judging by the reports which were given of him, he might be considered capable of devouring anything unedr a good-sized child. Our fishermen, casting about for information as to what was to them an entirely new kind of fish, were told that he ran up to 90 lb. in weight. Now a 90-lb. fish, combining the fierceness and voracity of a pike with the strength of a salmon, in a rapid stream with deep shelving banks, might fairly be considered an ugly customer, capable of drowning a man who was unfortunate enough to get in

over his waders; and perhaps some little credit is due to the pair who voluntarily went to attack him in his stronghold, for no one obliged them to do it. That the *huchen* proved not to be of such dimensions was not their fault, and should not be brought against them: they were prepared to tackle the 90-pounder if he turned up.

At Lenggries the traveller found his friend waiting the arrival of the "Post." He was an English admiral, and we will give him his title in our paper; whilst the former will, for the sake of euphony, be referred to hereafter by the letter G. The Admiral, who had been fishing for a few days, had killed one *huchen* of about 7 lb., and lost several more in a very provoking way: they had broken, not the gut or line, but the hooks of the Steward tackle he used. Three times had he got hold of a fish in a certain pool, and the creatures had invariably retired with the greatest rapidity to a part of it where the current was very strong, quickly gone through some performance or other there, and then disappeared, taking with them, probably as a memento of their visit, a bit of steel. It is not every day that Bavarian *huchen* meet an English admiral, and they acted in much the same way as Mr Calverley's maiden did, when she secured her precious cherry-stones. G. listened with great attention to this account, and declared that no fish could break any of his tackle; but there are other ways of killing cat than drowning her, and it is a foolish thing to boast when a *huchen* has anything to say in the matter. The Admiral soon went off to the river, G. shortly afterwards following him, but they missed one another, and did not meet till night.

The latter, left to his own devices, put on a salmon-fly, found his way over the river, and ran promptly into the arms of two big men, who seemed to look on him as rather an intruder. Under the shelter of umbrellas they were smoking cigars and watching a third man, who was also smoking, and fishing with an implement and tackle which needs a more eloquent pen than ours to do justice to. He was the biggest of the lot—a great, stout, fine-looking old Bavarian, with a thick white moustache and a ruddy face; and he was spinning, what in courtesy might be called a minnow, but in reality was a good-sized trout. It was not the length of his rod, or its weight, which were so astonishing—it was the inordinate thickness of its top, the stupendous hook, and the cable which connected the two, which was similar to that used by the ancient "who sat upon a rock and bobbed for whale." There was a good deal of lead hanging about the line near the swivels, and when the apparatus was pitched into the water, it made a splash which could be heard a long way off, and if it had alighted on the head of any *huchen* it would certainly have hurt him very much. But lest it should be thought that we are poking fun at this gentleman, or affecting to despise his proceedings, we hasten to say that he was a master of his craft, and needed no lessons from any one as to spinning his trout. He was the Oberförster of the Duke of Nassau, the head of the woodmen and keepers, and we got to know him and like him very much. Possibly no one, after reading this paper, will feel inclined to start off for the Bavarian Oberland for the sake of the sport we describe, but it is as well to say here that the

river is strictly preserved, and not open to strangers. The Oberförster span his pool without anything appearing, and then G. tried another with his "thunder and lightning." The three men were interested in the performance, but evidently did not think a fly likely to do any good, whilst the long salmon-rod seemed to them rather a slim weapon for its work. It was an Irish greenheart, and, in reality, much stronger than the giant's pole; but they judged by bulk, and did not make allowance for the difference in the wood. But that pole must be of good stuff too. It was popularly supposed that when the Oberförster hooked anything under 10 lb. he threw it over his shoulder—as a boy does a small trout or parr. At any rate, in that rapid river, often with tree-covered or broken banks, and with such a short line, the fish must be dealt with very summarily. We would have given good money to have seen him ram his great hook into the inside of a 20-pounder: perhaps he would have held the fish by main force on the top of the water till it was exhausted. The interior arrangement might give way—that would be the only chance for the *huchen*—none of the tackle would: there were about thirty yards of a kind of window-blind cord on the reel. Presently it began to drizzle, and then to pour, and the two spectators went home, but G. and the Oberförster sat in the shelter of the eaves of a little toll-house on the bridge, and discussed fishing in England, Scotland, and Bavaria, and chamois-shooting, and the price of wood, and many other things—the natural courtesy of this forester preventing him from even smiling at the ludicrous blunders and idiotic mistakes of his companion. After the Admiral had been given up as drowned, he

appeared, and reported having lost a *huchen*, a good one, on natural bait.

That evening G. was introduced to the society at the Post. The men were a fine-looking lot. There was only one lady, and she was fine-looking too. The landlord had a particularly handsome face. He was a silent, unemotional individual, who drank his own good beer all day long and all night long with his friends and guests, but never seemed the worse for it; and his eye and skin were as clear as if he were dieted regularly for the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race. Then there was a burly baron, such as one reads of in books, clad in the green-trimmed garments in which sporting Germans take delight. Also the doctor, the inspector of taxes, the schoolmaster, a retired priest, an artist, an individual who acted as paymaster to the duke, and a lieutenant of a cavalry regiment from Munich. This officer had married the landlord's sister, and though we mention her last she deserves the first place, for she had a beautiful face, and a stature and figure verging on the gigantic. A few years ago there can have been few women between Lenggries and Munich whom that Frau Lieutenant need have looked on as rivals in good looks. This couple had a daughter called Josephine; and G. being the fortunate possessor of a very long Pharaoh's serpent cut in horn, and living in a carved bone box, gave it to her, and won her small heart. All these people, except the baron and the lieutenant, lived permanently in the village, and they came with unfailing regularity each night to the inn, sometimes to eat their supper, but always to drink beer, play cards, and then drink beer again: when they were not drinking, they were smoking. None of

them were what we in England would call "gentlemen"; but I fancy if the question of condescension ever came into their minds with reference to mixing with the foreigners—they considered that it lay on their side. They held their little nightly club at the inn: if a stranger was well behaved to them, they would be civil to him. But that could not well be perfect equality—so they would have said—between wandering tourists, who might be anybodies, and established residents always to be found at their posts. Probably G., if he had been there by himself, would never have advanced further in intimacy with them than to be politely saluted on entering or leaving a room, or have some casual remark made to him about the weather. But the Admiral could talk German as well as any one in Lenggries. He had none of the pride which most Englishmen are supposed to have; and before he had been there many days, he was on intimate terms with the whole club, and G., being his friend, shared the intimacy. After supper they always joined the circle at the large table, and G. would sit one night between the priest and the baron, another between the doctor and the artist, and on a third was able to discuss—to a limited extent—the advantages of horse-breeding establishments with the cavalry lieutenant. At first the presence of strangers made a little awkwardness at this big table—but it soon wore off; and after a short time an outsider peeping in and surveying the noisy talkers, might have thought that they had all run about and played with one another in petticoats.

So the first day passed, and G. went to bed and dreamed partly of *huchen* catching, and partly of going in the morning to pay his for-

mal call in dress clothes at the Schloss, the idea of which rather frightened him.

The two friends were down by the river in good time the next day, and they went straight to a pool where the Admiral said he knew there was a *huchen*. It was a niceish pool to look at, with two or three big stones in it, suitable for fish to sit under, and a rapid and strong stream at its head, tail, and further side, for the pool only stretched half over the river. The first portion of it could be commanded from the bank, and the Admiral began operations, throwing his trout up stream and bringing it very quickly down with the current, and then as quickly up. He had not made a dozen casts when the water opened a little, a head appeared, there was a good splash, and G. saw his first *huchen*. The fish seemed a heavy one, he made the rod bend well, and took out line freely. There was some anxiety felt as to whether he would run out into the stream or pass down to the awkward corner at the bottom of the pool; but he left no one in suspense long. He got the trout and its hook out of his mouth somehow, and quickly went off—to Tölz, probably, to tell his friends about the foreign devils who had come to Lenggries. Great was the disgust of the two he left behind: with a rueful countenance the Admiral rearranged his trout, which had been sorely doubled up by what it had gone through. There were teeth-marks on the shoulder, but the big hook had somehow missed its hold. Wading was now necessary. G. went into the water and essayed to do battle with its inhabitants. He was not so good a hand at spinning as his friend, and his bait made a fearful splash; but, nevertheless, in three minutes he too

was fast in a *huchen*. And this creature also, finding that what he had got was not what he had wanted, spat it out, and went away shaking his tail. Then for half an hour the men sat and groaned in chorus on the bank, the while, with trembling fingers, they put on a fresh bait, added more hooks, and then G. once more waded in, and he had not fished more than half-a-dozen yards when up came a third *huchen*, seized the trout, and made off as if he meant to stick to it for life. This time he had, or ought to have had, four hooks in his mouth. "Aha! the third time for luck; we shall have him now." But will our readers believe that in five minutes this fish also got off? We are not writing a romance, or an account of an ideal day's fishing, but stern facts; and that fish got away. It does not seem as if it was a thing likely to happen in real life, but it did. Those left behind almost wept. The wretched trout came back empty, blobbing and jumping on the stream, tied up in a kind of knot, and spinning in a way that was enough to frighten a shark. We draw a veil over the next half-hour's conversation.

G. viciously stripped off the curly trout, and swore it was no good trying any more till they had got the Admiral's gaff-hook stuck in it as a weapon of offence. (Now the Admiral used a small click manufactured by himself out of a large corrugated-iron dolphin-hook.) It was plainly no use going on in that fashion; and besides, they had to pay their call at the Schloss, so they left the pool and went growling home to change. "We must yack it into them," said the Admiral; "we shall never do any good till we yack it into them." The visit to the Hochburg was pleasant, and not formidable. The

ladies showed the strangers over the large stables, and were much distressed at the bad behaviour of their *huchen*.

Then there came a broiling day with a bright sun,—“good for fishing,” said the Oberförster. It might have been, but somehow nothing was done. The Englishmen, the Oberförster and his rod, drove a few miles up the river. They had some beer at a snug little *wirtschaft*, and then they all fished. They tried trout and worm and minnow, and flailed away diligently, but with no result. The Admiral lost his worm-tackle, G. got over the tops of his waders, and the Oberförster was so exhausted at the end of the day that he had to be left at another *wirtschaft* to recruit himself. Hearty maledictions were bestowed on the *huchen*, and on the great dolphin-hook. G. cut this off the gaff, and buried as much of it as he could in a trout of gigantic size, from which an inch or two stuck out like the fluke of an anchor. It was so heavy that it sank the bait without the need of lead, and was always catching in the bottom. “Ah! if I could *only* get it well into a big one,” said the disconsolate owner, fondly eyeing it.

There was a sweet simplicity about the domestic arrangements and commissariat at Lenggries, and surely never since the days of Dick Swiveller's Marchioness had men so queer a little handmaiden to look after them. The inn was full, but for the sum of four shillings per head per week, large bedrooms were secured over the principal shop in the place. The small lassie, aged about ten, was the only servant: she was a bright, queer, barefooted little thing, exactly like the Marchioness, except in being better fed. For coffee in the morning and three rolls, three-

pence was charged. At the Post it was customary to pay for one's food directly it was eaten, and dinner seldom cost less than 90 *pennigs*, or about elevenpence; though it was indeed possible, by indulging one's appetite in beetroot or some such luxury, to bring it up to eighteenpence or so. The very plain food was served up hot, and everything was clean, so no one grumbled at the absence of a tablecloth. After supper and a cigar and some beer with the club, the Englishmen used to retire to their own quarters. There the Admiral generally produced his tackle and overhauled and tested it, and tied various hooks which would hold the 90-pounder himself if he got into them. He discoursed, too, eloquently of his travels. He had been all over the world, had met many distinguished people and seen many strange sights; and he had had the yellow fever, the small-pox, and the cholera, and yet lived to catch *huchen* in Bavaria. So G. listened to tales of fishing for infernal machines in the Baltic, and for salmon in Newfoundland, and queer doings in the tropics, and the nights never seemed long.

After the hot day came a very wet one, and the beautiful blue of the water disappeared. No one seems to account very satisfactorily for this colour. It is to be seen in little pools, and crevasses, and moulins on glaciers, and high up in the Alps where every footstep leaves a delicately tinted hollow in the white snow, and in rivers where the glacier-mud has settled, and in rivers also which rise at a comparatively low elevation. It cannot be the sky which causes it, for clouds and rain do not drive it away. It is never seen in England or Scotland. It is sometimes too blue, and looks artificial, as if

a tank in some works had burst, and the dye which was meant for Bavarian soldiers' uniforms had escaped into the stream. The peat-stained burns of the Highlands fit far better with mountain scenery, or the black waters of such loch-fed rivers as the Awe and Ness. G. often thought of the Argyleshire stream, for he had been fishing there a few weeks before. Considering that the Awe and the Isar are both rivers flowing through a hilly country, there are wonderfully few points of resemblance between them,—unless, indeed, the Highlanders who have been sleeping for 500 years under their many cairns just below the rock of Brander, can be compared to the warriors who fell at Hohenlinden. Five miles of rocky bed carries the dark waters of the one into Loch Etive, and the other rolls swiftly and smoothly to the Danube, and then travels for weeks across Europe to the Black Sea.

The next day was G.'s last at Lenggries, and the Admiral, to give his friend a better chance, unselfishly refused to take a rod, contenting himself with a gaff. The water had cleared a little, though it was still loaded with sand. The men walked up the valley to a place where a smaller stream, called the Jäche, joined the Isar. The place where the rivers met was very beautiful; the hills were densely wooded with fir, but their dark masses were brightened up here and there by tiny bits of gorgeous colouring from beech and birch and plane-tree which had caught the first touch of frost. It was too early for uniform autumn tints, but the reds and yellows and crimsons were the more striking for their being so widely scattered. On the barer hills narrow strips of plantation had been made in regular order for the sake of shelter. A

number of men were working on the rivers at their rafts,—picturesquely clad, wild-looking fellows, deft workers with the axe, and, if report does them no wrong, with the gun also. There are many chalets on the mountains, and hares and roe. In the wilder parts of the Tyrol the peasants are often great poachers, and wage a desperate and sometimes bloody war with the keepers. The work of the river-raftsmen must be often dangerous. One evening in the dusk G. was startled by seeing what he thought was a woman's figure standing on a narrow plank over a foaming lasher. But it was only an image of the Virgin, and was so contrived that, whilst one side represented her, the other gave the artist's idea of some masculine saint; and no doubt many a hearty prayer is sent up to the quiet figures as the rafts begin to feel the force of the current which is to carry them over the fall.

About a mile from the junction there is a dam, with the usual pool below. G. fished one side, and then cautiously waded across and commenced operations from the other, just where a heavy beam lay over part of the channel. Here he threw his trout. From the dark shadow cast by the beam a huge fish shot out, showing a yard-long brown back, in striking contrast to the clear green water in which he moved. He seemed to hesitate a second, and then ran at the dead trout and seized it, and retreated hastily to his lurking-place. Clearly and indisputably this was the time to follow the Admiral's advice, and yack it into him, and G. struck at the *huchen* as if he had been a crocodile, and the tackle adapted for the capture of such an animal. Nothing gave.

"By George!" said G. to himself (it was no good shouting his views

across the stream to his friend), "I believe I have you now."

Directly the great *huchen* felt the unpleasant accompaniment carried by the trout, he gave up all idea of going back to his own dwelling, and bolted out with a fierce rush right into the middle of the stream. He took out twenty yards of line, and then it was the old, old story—as old as love or anything else,—he got away. It was a horrid exhibition of brute force, quite calculated to make one sick. There was no skill about it—no science; an arm-chair or a hen-coop could have done what he did just as well, if they had been lightly hooked. The Admiral, on the other bank, had just got his gaff ready—he laid it aside and lit a cigar. It is possible he said something, but if he did, the roar of the stream prevented it being heard. G. cut off his useless minnow and threw it away, putting on a Loch Tay phantom,—and he went back to a bridge which crosses the Jäche. In a pool under it he got a pull from something—it might have been a stone, but it was uncommon like a fish. A friend of ours, when he has been fishing some time without doing any good, is in the habit of thrashing the water for a few minutes with his rod—thrashing it till it foams. He says it is good for soothing the mind, and also calling the attention of the fish. Under that bridge G., out of sight of the Admiral, relieved his outraged feelings in the same way. Presently the latter sauntered up, placidly smoking.

"Well, was he a good one?"

"Good one! Didn't you see him? But I did drive it into him that time!"

"Ah! but you didn't drive it in hard enough."

Then they tramped sulkily over

a horrid wilderness of shingle and rubbishy trees, till they came to another dam on the larger river again. Here the water was still thick, and the work seemed hopeless. But the longest lane has a turn; the most weary night must end. The despised and much abused artificial minnow, which had been declared by the collective wisdom of the whole club to be an absurdity, was taken possession of by a *huchen*, and this time really appreciated. He expressed a strong desire to rub himself under the wood-work of the dam, and then evinced a remarkable attraction for a post whose top was just visible under water. "He say he 'bliged" to run round that post. But there was more true nobleness about this *huchen* than any of the others, and when this pleasure was denied him, he gave in, came to the side, and was whipped out by the Admiral before he had quite made up his mind as to the proper course to pursue. He was a handsome, well-fed 5-lb. fish, with a dark back and grey sides, set off with the tiniest red spots. And G., as he looked at him, thought—"Ah, if I hadn't lost that other fellow!"

Later on a suspicious old *huchen* came out of his quarters into a rapid stream to look at the bait. He made a run at it. It is difficult, when one sees a fish do this, to prevent jerking the bait a little, or else staying its motion. After two or three minutes' delay it was shown him again. He made another rush at it, but did not touch. Another wait, and a third time the same performance was gone through. The fourth time the bait was left to itself; the ghostly-looking, shadowy form did not appear. G. did not now want to catch such a horrid, ill-bred, and evil-minded old fish, and—after trying

him once more—left him. Soon after, however, another came up—a lively gentleman. He took the fisherman a merry run for 150 yards down a very rapid stream, and was well gaffed by the Admiral before he was half done. He weighed about 6 lb.

The shades of evening found the men once more at the ill-omened pool where the three fish were lost the first day. G. tried it carefully down, but just before finishing got his bait stuck on a stone deep in the water. Something had to go, and as the stone declined to move, it was the gut: the good brown minnow was left behind. G. reeled up and landed, and prepared to take his rod down.

"You have another minnow?" said the Admiral.

"Yes; but it's not worth while trying it."

But the indefatigable Admiral got it out.

"There's always," he said, slowly, "another *huchen* in that pool;" and he was right—for in three minutes the blue minnow was inside him (the fish). He was a big one. He ran madly out into the middle of the river, and set out for Töiz as hard as he could go. G. had to scramble up an awkward bank, for the water grew too deep to follow in; but the *huchen* was still on. He raced along the firm ground, and then had to jump into the stream again, to avoid some trees; but still the *huchen* was on. He got out fifty yards of line, however, whilst he had a chance; and as the powerful current aided his own energetic exertions, it was not easy to get a pull on him. A long sandy spit let the fisherman gain a little; and then, just as the latter made up his mind that it would be necessary to give the fish the butt at the end of the spit, owing to

the wooded banks which followed, the fish also made up his mind and—broke his hold.

The Admiral arrived in a great hurry, just in time not to see the last of him.

"How," said G., "can one yack a hook into a brute like that? and what is the good of trying it, when they have mouths made of china or cast steel?" It was a disastrous finish to a not altogether unsuccessful day.

The next day G. left Lenggries and went to Munich. There at the exhibition he wandered through acres of pictures, many beautiful, many most miserable, and some ghastly and horrible and hideous to a degree. One small painting he coveted, called "The Poacher's Grave,"—a man lying on his face in the snow in a chasm between steep rocks from which he had fallen,—a wild picture of an open grave in which he might lie for ever and not be seen again by mortal eyes. Then he began the long journey back to Argyleshire. He left the Admiral behind; and that gentleman, after contending with noble obstinacy against heavy spates, which occurred when he was well, and bad colds, which kept him to his room when the river was in order, and moreover, against vicious and wicked *huchen*, succeeded in capturing a 12-pounder and an 8-pounder, besides smaller fry. These men had

to encounter many difficulties. They had to find out where, in many miles of water, the fish lay, and what they would take, and how they would take it; and they had to teach themselves to use strange tackle. But if ever they fish again in the Isar, they flatter themselves that they will be able to render a better account of the Salmonidæ which inhabit its blue waters.

We can fancy some one throwing down this paper and saying, "Why, confound the fellow! he never got the 90-pounder at all, or anything like it." We take credit for the omission. It would have been just as easy to have made out that we got,—not the 90-pounder, for that would have attracted attention, and might have led to inquiry—but say a dozen, running from 50 to 75 lb. Then a little judicious reticence as to names would have made all safe. Our paper is a full, true, and faithful recital of what really happened, and we think that such an account of a fishing expedition is very rare. And if the reader does not believe us now, we hope he will go to Lenggries to find out for himself, and fish (without leave) in the Isar. There, whether he meets with *huchen* or not, he would soon make the acquaintance of the Herr Oberförster, and of his stalwart, heavy-shoed, green-footless-stock-ing-wearing subordinates.

A VENDETTA.

How it began, who began it, when the first note of battle was sounded, what were the scene, place, and occasion of the first exchange of hostilities, remains to this day a mystery. Some are inclined to think that at a certain dinner-party Mrs Highty, who belongs to a notoriously short-sighted family, trod unwittingly and unwarily on Mrs Tighty's long velvet tail as the latter lady was being conducted before her into the dining-room. But this theory would make the Highty faction decidedly the first aggressors. Now it is well known and even written in the chronicles of the Highty family,—*vide* a long letter in the possession of the present compiler of this veracious history,—that up to and even beyond the period of the lamentable accident before mentioned, and for which Mrs Highty declares she made ample apology, the Hightys and Tightys were the closest of friends. Therefore the injury to the velvet train may be dismissed as irrelevant to the present inquiry.

But that a screw was loose somewhere between these two highly respected and hitherto united families was soon apparent to the most unobservant member of our Blankshire society. It may be necessary here to mention that Mrs Tighty, being the daughter of a viscount, was naturally the guiding star of our dinner-parties, unless it chanced that a meteor in the person of an actual peeress sailed for a brief space across our firmament, or, as once happened, that a Von appeared to contest the claim to precedence of the Hon. The perplexity and embarrassment into which we were all thrown by this last complica-

tion I shall never forget. We knew the touchiness of the *real* foreign aristocracy when there was any danger of their being confounded with the sham counts and countesses whom we would have repudiated as haughtily as themselves. But though there was no doubt about our having now to deal with a genuine article, there was no end of doubt as to its claims to rival in pedigree our own indigenous production. Under these puzzling circumstances we were everlastingly grateful to Mrs Tighty for the graceful manner in which she at once abdicated in favour of the stranger, remarking that the laws of hospitality must always supersede those of etiquette. This observation, especially as our German guest did not hear, or at least did not understand it, immediately relieved us from our dilemma, and also considerably increased Mrs Tighty's popularity.

For we all liked her, much better than we liked Mrs Highty, who, as a baronet's daughter, and holding second, though only second rank in our society, was a much more sulphurous element in the composition of our dinner-parties. Mrs Tighty's place was known and assured, always excepting under the before-mentioned circumstances, which did not often occur; besides, when they did occur, she had only to be taken down one peg lower, and all was right. But Mrs Highty was always getting in the way. If we asked her to dinner, we must be sure that there was somebody to hand her, not inferior, or not *much* inferior, in consequence to the personage whose right it was to escort Mrs Tighty. In the drawing-room there must be a sort of throne or

seat, just half a step lower, as it were, ready for Mrs Highty to sink into at the same moment that Mrs Tightly took the chair of state reserved for her on the other side of the fireplace. The anxious hostess or her daughter had to be on the watch that coffee was handed to Mrs Highty before any one of lower rank got a chance of it. The Highty and Tightly carriages must be announced as nearly as possible at the same moment; and in wishing her guests farewell, the hostess must be careful to measure out her gratitude for the favour conferred by their visit in nicely balanced proportion. In fact, she had not a moment's peace until they were both safely out of the house.

It will be readily understood, therefore, that when it began to be seen that the two ladies declined to meet one another the relief was immense. Formerly it was thought to be a necessary compliment to the one to ask the other to bear her company, and hence all the tribulation which I have been describing. Now we were free from this obligation, and might eat our dinners and pass our evenings in comfort.

Alas! how short-lived was our joy! In the first place, we soon found that now we must give two parties in place of one. If Mrs Highty was asked to dinner this week, her rival must be invited the next, and, which was still more troublesome, repasts of equal splendour and guests of equal distinction must be provided for both entertainments. For though the two ladies might pass each other when they did chance to meet with so slight a mutual recognition as might be supposed to denote the utmost indifference to each other's existence, we knew very well from authentic sources of intelligence,

that each was devoured by a jealous curiosity to hear the smallest details of the party given in honour of the other. And as it was next to impossible that both parties should be precisely alike in their histories and combination, we were constantly giving offence. The plot, in fact, was thickening, though not one of us could have told what was the thread of the story in which, as in a labyrinth of cross-purposes, we were becoming involved, and a feud which threatened to undermine the whole fabric of our society was slowly but surely spreading. For I need hardly point out that, whereas we had at one time laboriously but not unsuccessfully tried to be loyal to a joint monarchy, we now naturally took part with one or the other sovereign. The people invited to meet Mrs Tightly were very apt to think that their banquet was less sumptuous than that given a few days before to the hostile faction of Highty. And thus things went on until there was hardly a house in our part of the county in which the old pleasant relations had not been altered, and into which envy, malice, and uncharitableness had not found their way.

Matters were in this condition when a modest little villa in our neighbourhood, which was usually let to summer lodgers, was taken by a lady of whom nothing more was known than that her name was Mrs Smith. Soon, however, our ignorance was dispelled. At first none of us had thought of even calling on her. But a certain old lady who, if she had not been too old and infirm to go out visiting, would rightfully have taken precedence even of the Hon. Mrs Tightly, and who sometimes saw company at home, invited us all to a great luncheon-party, at which, to our amazement and even

consternation, we beheld a modest-looking, shabbily dressed little woman, handed to the luncheon-table by our hostess herself. This was her way of indicating the personage whom she considered of most consequence amongst her guests; and so well versed was she known to be in the laws of etiquette, that her preference of any one to such an honour was always accepted as a sort of social diploma of rank. And on this occasion who should the upstart be before whom even Mesdames Highty and Tightly had to veil their haughty crests, but this most insignificant and unknown Mrs Smith!

We were all stupefied. Was the stranger a duchess or princess in disguise, or—could our benevolent but slightly eccentric hostess design to teach us all a lesson on the vanity of human greatness? If so, she had wofully mistaken her women. Already Mrs Highty's brow was black, and even the less combustible Mrs Tightly was beginning to swell with injured dignity. We onlookers were perhaps inclined after the first shock to enjoy the joke; but we all felt sorry for poor Mrs Smith, on whom had been thrust this perilous distinction. If the idea of calling on the solitary denizen of Ivy Cottage had been about to suggest itself to any one, seeing that Lady —— had already taken compassion on her, it must now be completely abandoned. We had enough to do with our two factions. Which of us would venture to tackle this third bone of contention? As for Lady ——'s unaccountable caprice, we could only ascribe it to the weakness of advancing age.

But we were wrong. The old lady knew what she was about, and guessed, moreover, what was in our minds. When luncheon was over, but before we rose from

table, she claimed silence, and announced that she was going to propose a toast. We were accustomed to her kindly, old-fashioned ways, but we now felt that something more was coming than the usual health to absent friends, or mention of the brave son in India, of whose glories we were scarcely less proud than his fond old mother. We had seen some whispering between her and her unknown guest, and some putting aside, as it seemed, on Lady ——'s part of an argument or remonstrance from Mrs Smith. "Nonsense, nonsense, my dear," she was heard to say; "I want everybody to know." Then she took her glass in hand, and spoke.

"My good friends, you know you never leave my table without kindly joining his old mother in wishing health to my dear son, who is still far away from us. But to-day I want you to drink health—even before we speak of John—to Major Smith, the husband of this lady whom I've now the pleasure of introducing to you. And I'm sure you'll do so heartily when I tell you that he's the Major Smith who distinguished himself so at the battle of ——; and he's the man who saved my boy's life, and who got the Victoria Cross; and he's been made a C.B.—and he'll be a K.C.B., I haven't a doubt, if ——" but here her words were drowned in a tempest of applause. To be sure, we had all heard of the brave Major Smith, and we were all delighted to drink his health and to see his wife. And after this there could be no doubt about our calling on her, and asking her to our parties and everything.

This was all very well, and through the following week carriages and cards poured down on Ivy Cottage. But human nature

remains human nature, and etiquette remains etiquette, and precedence is a prize not to be lightly relinquished. So, could it be expected that Mrs Tightly, not to speak of Mrs Highty, could meekly resign the honours hitherto held so undisputedly—except between themselves—without a struggle?

I need not say with what untiring zeal we discussed the question amongst ourselves as to whether a C.B.'s wife ought or ought not to walk before a baronet's or a peer's daughter. "Peerages" are expensive books, as everybody knows, and none of us were very rich. But to my certain knowledge there was a sudden importation of red books into the country; and those who had none, and grudged buying them, made long pilgrimages, as in olden times, to some shrine where a sight might be procured of the sacred volume. Yet even then we were not quite happy. The V.C. complicated the matter. Also, did not the service done to Lady ——'s gallant son, our own county hero, increase the weight of our responsibilities? We thought and talked, we studied tables of precedence, we wrote to the "Queen," getting back snubbing answers for our pains, and being dreadfully afraid lest our friends should pierce the mystery of our pseudonym, and laugh at us for doing what they were perhaps going to do themselves. We tried to invent new ways of paying due reverence to our three luminaries, and keeping them from falling foul of each other and producing general chaos. And in the midst of all this commotion we heard that Mrs Highty and Mrs Tightly had been reconciled to each other, and were making common cause against the intruder on their rights. This, at least,

was one good thing, even though it did not help us much in our difficulties.

As for Mrs Smith, she seemed strangely indifferent to the honours thrust upon her. This was a little exasperating, considering the trouble she was giving us. On the whole, we did not care much for her, though she was inoffensive enough. It was inconvenient, too, to be obliged often to include her little girl in our invitations. Mrs Smith would not come either to luncheon or garden party without bringing her little daughter. She excused this on the ground that she had no nurse or governess with whom to leave the child, who was, I must also say, a well-behaved, good little thing, easily amused, and perfectly happy if allowed to sit quietly by her mother's knee. The two were devoted to each other, and if we thought Mrs Smith rather stupid and commonplace, we could not but commend her training of her child.

After some little time the ferment of our hospitality subsided, much I think to Mrs Smith's relief. She was allowed to remain quietly with little Bessie at Ivy Cottage, and make herself happy with the child in her own way. Then as no third neutralising element interposed between the two previously contending forces, we began to be afraid of a resumption of hostilities. But Mrs Highty and Mrs Tightly had been driven into each other's arms by stress of adverse circumstances, and could not all at once retreat from the friendship which had been re-established with so much apparent cordiality. But our experienced eyes could see that each lady had her high horse standing ominously near, and was prepared on the smallest provocation to mount that warlike steed; and

we felt that, after all, the termination of such a hollow truce must soon be looked for.

Suddenly one day a rumour spread amongst us. It was Mrs Highty who brought me the first news. Mrs Tightly was sitting with me at the time, and I remember that my first feeling when my new visitor was shown in was dismay at the impossibility of providing her with a comfortable chair unless Mrs Tightly vacated the one which with some trouble I had provided for her, for I was about to change my house, and my rooms were being dismantled of furniture. And as the Highty equipage drew up at my door, I had seen Mrs Tightly settle herself still more stiffly and squarely in her arm-chair. What was I to do?

But before I had time to stammer out the apology I had been hastily devising, Mrs Highty sat down on a three-legged stool that somebody had brought from the kitchen. "Oh," she exclaimed, "what do you think! Poor dear little Bessie Smith has taken diphtheria. She's very ill, and her poor mother is helpless with terror. I've just been at Ivy Cottage and seen her. She's absolutely stupefied. She says the child never had a day's illness before. I've offered to get a nurse for her, for I believe Mrs Smith is too bewildered to know what she's doing."

It was too true. Soon we heard that the child was sinking. There was no want of help, if human help could have saved her. The mother could only sit by her as if her mute agony of clinging love could

baffle the fate that was to separate them. But doctor, nurse, and pitying friends were all at hand, and everything that could be done was done—in vain.

During these brief but most sorrowful three days there was scarcely an hour of the day during which one or other of us was not at Ivy Cottage. It was absolutely necessary that some one should take charge not only of the sick-room, but of the miserable, paralysed mother. We relieved one another. Mrs Highty and Mrs Tightly took their turns of watching and attendance, and shared with one another the duty of providing the proper stimulants and nourishment which Mrs Smith was unable to think of. And as they had been foremost in efforts to save her, they stood nearest one another when we followed little Bessie to her quiet grave.

Mrs Smith rejoined her husband in India. There was rejoicing amongst us last year when we heard that another daughter had been sent to comfort them. Mrs Highty and Mrs Tightly are the two godmothers.

I do not say that between these ladies there never arises a shade of animosity which reminds one of the old vendetta. But they are good Churchwomen both; and as every Sunday they walk up the churchyard path and pass the little grave on which each so often places fresh memorial flowers, the sight of it must, I think, help them to begin another week at least in mutual charity and goodwill.

Was it for this that the child came amongst us?

PROPOSED MEDICAL LEGISLATION.

SOME observations by Professor Huxley on the proper limits of State interference with the medical profession, delivered at the opening of one of the London medical schools last October, may serve to direct attention to a Government Bill of last session which has received far too little attention,—a Bill which, though crowded out by the pressure of business in the House of Commons, seems likely to reappear, with all its imperfections, during the present session, in practically the same shape as it has already been presented to the legislature.

There was indeed, if we may credit the reiterated assertions of Ministers, no Bill among the slaughtered innocents of the session, whose fate caused more real concern to its authors than this one, which, it was fondly hoped, would have settled for another half-century or so all matters concerning the medical profession with which Parliament has anything to do. Even so late as the Tuesday in the last week during which the House sat, it was apparently hoped and believed that time might still be found to read the Bill a second time, to pass it through Committee, and to read it a third time; and it was only when the opportunity on Tuesday night had been missed, that the Prime Minister regretfully announced that the Bill must be given up for the present.

It goes without saying that a Bill intended to be rushed through the House in this fashion at the fag-end of the session was considered as nearly as possible perfect. Mr Gladstone had described it as one to make the medical profession in England, Scotland, and

Ireland “one in standard and one in authority”; and an admirer of the Bill, writing to ‘The Times’ from Birmingham, quoted this as a happy description of the Bill, and added that it was in many respects the best that had ever been before the legislature on the subject.

Professor Huxley, who was himself one of the Royal Commissioners that reported on the subject of medical diplomas two years ago, thinks, on the contrary, that all needful reforms would be accomplished by the addition of two clauses to the Medical Act of 1858, which should provide (1) that no one should be placed on the Medical Register who fails to produce evidence of knowledge in all three branches of medical practice—medicine, surgery, and midwifery; and (2) that such evidence shall be the certificate of any examining body, a certain number of the examiners being appointed by the Medical Council,—this latter clause being intended to enable the Council to enforce equality in the minimum standard of examination.

How far Professor Huxley’s conception of what is needed in the way of change differs from that of the framers of the Government Bill, will be seen by a comparison of the above with the following, which are, briefly stated, some of the principal provisions and omissions of the proposed measure.

1. To abolish, so far as legislation can do it by repeal of the Acts of Parliament establishing them, the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Society of Apothecaries.

2. To destroy the protection hitherto afforded to the public by enactments against quacks and

impudent pretenders to medical knowledge.

3. To set up, in place of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, three Examining Boards, which, after examining a student and finding him competent to practise medicine or surgery, can give him no title to call himself doctor, physician, or surgeon.

4. To make no provision (in a Bill designed, too, be it remembered, to make the profession in the three countries *one in standard and one in authority*) for equality in the courses of study required by each of these three boards, or in the amount of fees payable to them for examination.

5. To authorise each of these boards to charge a higher fee to one class of students—and that presumably the poorer class—than to another class, for precisely the same examinations.

6. To make it a distinct advantage for a person wishing to become a legally qualified practitioner in Great Britain to be able to prove "that he is not a British subject."

7. To make a complete muddle of the question of medical titles.

8. To grant to the members of the medical profession a sham and wholly valueless representation on the Medical Council.

9. To provide, on pretended reciprocity principles, for the admission of foreigners and colonists to practise in England, without undergoing the examinations required from natives, the provisions being decidedly favourable to the foreigner.

On each of these points a few words of explanation is necessary.

1. The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, with, in England, the Apothecaries' Society, constitute at the present time the chief examining bodies for medical diplomas. From returns furnished to the

General Medical Council, it appears that, during the four years ending with 1882, they examined in England 4119 candidates, as against 552 examined during the same period by the English universities; that the corresponding Irish bodies examined 1254 candidates, as against 546 examined by the Irish universities; while the Scotch colleges examined 2567, as against 1353 examined by Scottish universities. The colleges are therefore doing, and have some of them been doing for centuries, an important national work, towards the expense of which the national purse contributes not a single farthing. From the fees paid by candidates for their examinations and diplomas, the colleges have hitherto been able not only to pay the expenses of their own organisations, but also to maintain in each of the three capital cities valuable museums and libraries, and to institute professorships for the advancement of medical and surgical knowledge. No one who is in a position to compare the state of the profession forty or fifty years ago with its condition at the present time, can doubt that these colleges have rendered immense services to the nation in testing the qualifications of the thousands of well-qualified practitioners who form the great bulk of family doctors at the present time.

It is quite true that the examinations have not always been as comprehensive as they might have been, some of the colleges having restricted themselves too much to medicine and others to surgery; while even at the most important examining body in the three kingdoms—the Royal College of Surgeons of England—it was, until quite recently, possible for a student to obtain a diploma to prac-

tise without having been in any way tested as to his knowledge of midwifery.

It is also true that the college examinations in that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland have gained a reputation among medical students of being more easily passed than those in England or Ireland, and that hence it has been a matter of constant occurrence for Irish and English students, who feared they might not pass in their own countries, to cross the Channel, or go over the Border, and return full-fledged practitioners; but these are clearly matters which call for the reform rather than the abolition of the colleges. They are matters which might have been amended long ago, had the Medical Council, which was expressly appointed by Act of Parliament in 1858 to see after such things, done its duty, and reported any or every examination which they considered defective to the Privy Council, which was thereupon empowered to withdraw all legal rights from diplomas granted in consequence of such defective examination. This, however, the Council has never done.

As to the effect of the Government Bill on these colleges, the following passages from a statement prepared by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh show that it is abolition, not reform, which will, it is apprehended by those immediately concerned, take place, if the Bill ever becomes law:—

“If the present Bill becomes law, all the examinations in Scotland will be thrown into the hands of the universities; the examiners will consist of the professors and their nominees. Even now, the classes in the universities would not be nearly so large as they are, if the additional exam-

iners were thoroughly independent men, and if the professors did not examine their own pupils; but in the future students will feel even more than at present, that if they are to present themselves with any chance of success, they must attend the lectures of those who are to examine them. This will inevitably result in the destruction of the extra-mural school, which has long been one of the most important features of medical education in Edinburgh, and has been of the greatest advantage to the university itself, as a training-ground for professors, and as supplying deficiencies, when there has been a failure on the part of the universities. . . . It surely cannot be that the legislature desires the extinction of these bodies (the colleges), which by their exertions in the cause of medical education, by the establishment of museums and libraries, and by doing their best to maintain a healthy tone in the profession, have contributed largely to the high standing of medical practitioners in Scotland.”

The extent to which the English College of Surgeons will be affected may be estimated from the fact, that of its total income last year, amounting to £19,374, no less a sum than £16,249 was derived from fees paid by students for their examinations,—fees which it would no longer be necessary for them to pay to the college when the new Board of Examination was established. The Irish College of Surgeons is even more entirely dependent on fees for its income than the English one, and is, or was last year, indebted to its bankers to a considerable extent. Thus, though these surgical colleges, being instituted by royal charter, cannot be directly abolished by Act of Parliament, they are to be slowly starved to death by being deprived of their principal means of sustenance.

“You take my house, when you do take the prop

That doth sustain my house ; you take
my life,
When you do take the means whereby
I live."

What makes it more remarkable that the colleges should be thus dealt with is, that a principal share in the working of the new scheme is assigned to them in the Bill. But all considerations as to the manner in which their pecuniary interests will be affected have been hitherto met by Mr Mundella, the Minister in charge of the Bill, with a lofty sneer at those who urge such "beggary vested interests" in opposition to his magnificent schemes of reform!

2. The avowed object of legislative interference with the medical profession on the part of the State has always hitherto been to protect its subjects against those impudent pretenders to medical knowledge who prey upon the poor and ignorant. Thus, when the Act concerning physicians and surgeons was passed in the time of Henry VIII. (3 Henry VIII. cap. 11), it was recited in the preamble, that "forasmuch as the science and cunning of physick and surgery, to the perfect knowledge whereof be requisite both great learning and ripe experience, is daily within this realm exercised by a great multitude of ignorant persons, of whom the great part have no manner of insight into the same, nor into any other kind of learning, to the grievous hurt, damage, and destruction of many of the king's liege people," &c.,—showing clearly the object of this Act, which, by the way, is the first proposed to be repealed in the Government Bill.

Again, when the Apothecaries' Act was passed in 1815,—an Act the greater part of which is also proposed to be repealed in the Government Bill,—the same object was kept clearly in view in the

provisions which were made for imposing penalties on those who practised medicine without having undergone the prescribed examination. The period when that Act was passed was the dark one described by George Eliot in 'Middlemarch,' when the public were accustomed to swallow large cubic measures of phisic, prescribed by unscrupulous ignorance which had taken no degree and passed no examination,—a seven years' apprenticeship to an apothecary being all that was then thought necessary to make a man proficient in the "rule of thumb" style of practice, which was at that time the current one.

In order to remedy the evils of this system, which, as George Eliot writes, did not in the least prevent quackery from flourishing and having an excellent time of it, it was enacted that apothecaries were for the future to receive a distinctly medical training, and to pass an examination before being permitted to try their skill upon the public. Two things which, if the Government Bill pass, will be divorced, appeared to the common-sense of our forefathers to be intimately united—viz., fixing a standard for those desiring to practise medicine, and forbidding those who could not reach that standard to practise it to the public peril. The immediate result of the repeals proposed to be made by the Government Bill will be to throw the matter back to where it stood three-quarters of a century ago, and to convert 14,000 chemists now keeping shop in England and Wales into irregular medical practitioners, without any medical training whatever. As to the numerous tribe of quacks, it will give them practically *carte blanche* to trifle with life and health as much as they like.

3. The three Medical Boards

which the Bill proposes to establish, would practically supersede the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in all their most important functions. They would have the control of all examinations for admission to the profession, the inspection of medical schools, and the right to appoint examiners for the pass-examination in each division of the kingdom. They would themselves consist of delegates from every university and medical college in that part of the kingdom for which they acted. Thus in England the medical board would consist of representatives from the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, Durham, Victoria, and the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons. Yet, strange to say, this union of representatives from doctor-making universities and colleges is not to be permitted to make a man a doctor or a surgeon. Even when their own picked examiners have declared a student to be fit to practise in any branch of the profession, the board are to have no power to dub him doctor, physician, or surgeon. They are simply to cause his name to be entered on the Medical Register, which the public may, if they like, consult before calling him in professionally; but as to giving him authority to use the letters M.D. after his name, that would be infringing on the rights of the universities which some of them represent, and L.R.C.P. or M.R.C.S. would in the same way interfere with the colleges. The title "Medical Practitioner" was at one time thought of, but this has been dropped, perhaps because its shortening into M.P. would be inconvenient and confusing. So now the examinee is to go without any title, and virtue will doubtless be its own reward.

4. The absence from the Bill of

provision for uniformity of educational standard throughout the kingdom has been pointed out by the Irish College of Surgeons, in a printed memorandum on the Bill, in which that college urges that it should be made impossible for the medical board of any one division of the kingdom to accept a shorter and cheaper course of medical study for its examinations than that required by another board. The chief purpose of the Bill, the memorandum states, is to ensure competency of the practitioner, by requiring a sufficient minimum of education, and to put a stop to the practice of students who are not educated up to the requirements of their own country, resorting to institutions of a lower educational standard elsewhere. The Bill attempts to meet this downward competition among medical boards by providing for uniformity of examination; but it permits any amount of downward competition in curriculum of study.

"A shorter and narrower course of study," the college states, "is also proportionately cheaper; so that if one medical board be permitted to examine candidates upon materially lower requirements than another, the inevitable result will be, that students will seek to save time, labour, and money, by resorting to that board, and it will thus be totally impossible for other divisions of the kingdom to maintain a sufficient educational standard. This lowering of the extent of courses of study, and consequent cheapening of education, has, in fact, caused a migration of a very large number of Irish students from their place of education to seek qualifications from licensing bodies elsewhere, which accept a lower, briefer, and cheaper curriculum."

Even in a medical Bill there is need, it seems from this, for "justice to Ireland" being done!

5. The fee authorised to be charged for the pass-examination

instituted by the State ought to be no greater than would be sufficient to pay the expenses attendant on such examinations, and should be paid equally by all admitted. But under the provisions of the Government Bill the representatives of the State say virtually to students—

“Before we can admit you to the final test, which for reasons of State it has been thought necessary to institute, you must pay a fee not only sufficient to cover the cost of your examination, and of the various other duties with which the board which provides for your examination is charged, but also to provide compensation for those corporate bodies which maintain medical museums or libraries, for the loss of fees consequent on our instituting this examination; unless, indeed, you happen to have had sufficient means at command to enable you to obtain a university training, in which case you pay only the cost of your examination.”

Surely the State has no right to make fish of one and flesh of another after this fashion!

6. The clauses in the Bill which deal with the subject of foreigners and colonists who, having obtained medical diplomas in their respective countries, wish to practise in Great Britain, seem to have been specially designed so as to give privileges to aliens which are denied to British subjects. A diploma which, if held by an Englishman who has always been domiciled in the United Kingdom, would be useless to him, would at once admit its holder to the Medical Register, and so to a legal right to practise in Great Britain, provided he could prove “that he is not a British subject.” Surely the proper principle would be to admit to the Register the holders of

all foreign diplomas which were thought worthy of being admitted there, whatever might be the nationality of the holders of such diplomas. We shall have something more to say on this subject by-and-by.

7. The Bill, if passed, will throw the whole subject of medical titles into the most delightful muddle conceivable. To appreciate the ingenuity which has been wasted over this portion of it, it is necessary to be aware that the Medical Act of 1858 contains what is known as a “penal clause,” forbidding the use of such titles as doctor, surgeon, physician, &c., by unqualified persons. This clause the Government Bill proposes to repeal, along with the greater part of the Act. The clause as it stands in the Act is so defectively worded as to be practically of very little use against even the grossest impostors. But the clause in the Government Bill is very much weaker than that which the Royal Commission, which two years ago reported on the subject, acknowledged to be practically a failure. And not content with this, the Bill courts certain failure in another direction, by introducing for the first time a penalty directed against registered medical practitioners themselves, if they or any of them take or use any medical title not permitted to be entered on the Medical Register, or any medical title to which in somebody else’s opinion they are not entitled. Under these clauses it might become a question for our courts of law to determine whether a fully qualified doctor who described himself as an *accoucheur* (a medical title not permitted to be entered on the Register) would not be liable to be prosecuted;¹

¹ A case which has occurred while this paper is passing through the press shows that this is by no means an imaginary danger. A surgeon holding the diplomas

and another question which has much exercised the minds of juvenile writers in the medical papers, whether a "physician" is a "doctor," and has a right to call himself so, would almost certainly come before them. In throwing open the flood-gates of squabbling litigation on such points as these, the good old maxim has apparently been forgotten, "*De minimis non curat lex.*" The law has enough to do when it devotes its attention solely to wrong-doers, and may well leave the settlement of questions of professional etiquette to professional societies. To attempt to create a new offence in a matter about which opinion within the profession is pretty evenly divided, and about which the outside public knows practically nothing, is to court failure either in the attempt or after its apparent success.

8. One of the proposals in the Bill, of which Mr Mundella specially boasts, is that of giving the right of being represented on the Medical Council to all members of the profession; but the illusive and perfectly valueless nature of the provisions for this purpose can easily be demonstrated. Since 1858, when the Council was first formed, it has had charge in a certain sense of medical education and examinations, the Medical Register, and the British Pharmacopœia. On the first of these subjects it has from time to time made a variety of recommendations, which it had no power to enforce, and which have accordingly been either accepted and obeyed, or rejected and disobeyed, by those concerned, at their pleasure. As to its power over exam-

inations for admission to the profession, it has not in a single instance during its quarter of a century of existence, taken the steps prescribed in the Act of 1858 for reporting inefficient ones to the Privy Council. The Royal Commission, to which reference has already been made, suggest as one reason for this, "the great power of the individual medical authorities, of which most send a representative to the Council itself;" and no one acquainted with the subject can doubt that if the Council had been composed of representatives of the profession itself, the result would have been very different. It is now proposed to give, indeed, a few representatives of the profession (four in number) seats on the Council (of eighteen members); but before doing so, all real power of action in matters relating to medical education and examinations is to be taken from the Council, and transferred to three new medical boards, consisting solely of delegates from those same medical authorities whose presence on the existing Medical Council is believed to have led to its most serious failure.

There remain the administrative functions of the Council connected with the Medical Register and the British Pharmacopœia; but as the one is in charge of a very able and efficient registrar, and the other relegated to a special committee, the duties falling upon the Council in connection with either could not be heavy, and would indeed hardly warrant the assembling of eighteen picked men of the profession in London every

of M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P., who has been practising as a dentist since 1867, applied to the Medical Council for registration in the Dentists' Register, and was refused,—the consequence being that he can neither call himself a surgeon-dentist, a dental surgeon, nor even simply a dentist.

year. Perhaps it is in view of this diminution in the purely medical matters which would come before the Council that provision is made in the Bill for the appointment to it of others besides medical practitioners!

9. The reciprocity clause, which, if introduced in a Conservative measure, would certainly give rise to an outcry, runs as follows:—

“Her Majesty may from time to time, by Order in Council, declare that this part of this Act shall be deemed on and after a day to be named in such order to apply to any British possession or foreign country which in the opinion of her Majesty affords to the registered medical practitioners of the United Kingdom such privileges of practising in such possession or foreign country as to her Majesty may seem just; and from and after the date of such Order in Council such British possession or foreign country shall be deemed to be a British possession or foreign country to which this Act applies within the meaning of this part thereof; but until such Order in Council has been made in respect of any British possession or foreign country, this part of this Act shall not be deemed to apply to any such possession or country; and the ‘prescribed day’ as used in this part of this Act means, as respects any British possession or foreign country, the day on and after which this part of this Act is declared by Order in Council to apply to such British possession or foreign country.”

Whatever may be said in favour of reciprocity pure and simple, few will be found to defend a system which would tell altogether in favour of the foreigner, as the other provisions in this part of the Bill show would be the case in the present instance. Thus it is provided that the medical diploma or diplomas granted in a British pos-

session or foreign country, which are to be recognised here, are to be such as not only satisfy the Medical Council as to the possession by the holder of the requisite knowledge and skill for the efficient practice of medicine, surgery, and midwifery, but also—as is mostly the case on the Continent—as entitle the holder to practise medicine in such British possession or foreign country. The authorities of such British possession or foreign countries will of course be entitled to ask for the production of a similar diploma from Englishmen desiring to practise abroad; but this is just what cannot possibly be furnished to them,—no British diploma or diplomas, if this Bill pass, conferring the right to practise in any part of Great Britain, but only the entry of the name in the register.

The ridiculous position in which English doctors would be placed, as compared with their foreign *confrères*, is thus obvious. In their own country, the possession of a British diploma, or even of all the sixty British diplomas that are granted put together, would not give them the right to practise. Abroad, they would have no evidence but the production of a printed copy of the Medical Register to show that they had passed the only examination which could confer on them the right to practise. No one who impartially considers the provisions of this Bill, and its effects, if passed, upon the organisation of the medical profession in these islands, can regret for a moment that it was not permitted to pass through its stages with that indecent haste which was apparently desired by some Ministerial members of the House of Commons.

THE EARTHLY PARADISE.

It is a noteworthy fact that in almost all the religions of the ancient world, the human soul, though it may be defined as immortal and disembodied, seldom entirely quits this earth. Before the birth of Geography, men imagined the world to be large enough to contain, not only the land of the living, but also the land of the dead, and even the habitations of the gods themselves. The Greek divinities dwelt on an Olympus which was originally earthly and local; so did the Indian gods on their Mount Meru; so, too, the deities of the North abode in an Asgard, which men conceived as a fixed point exactly in the middle of the face of the earth. And if a terrestrial dwelling could be found for the gods, much more could a habitation be discovered for the disembodied spirits of men. Soul-lands, then, whether figured as under-worlds or isles of the blessed (to use familiar names), are of almost universal acceptance. With the former class we are not here concerned; but to the latter, when a place on the surface of the earth is assigned to them, we may apply the name "Earthly Paradise." These, then, form one branch of our subject; along with them must be ranged the Christian Paradise, which was identified with the Biblical Eden — and also the deathless lands, not destined for souls, but for living men, with which we sometimes meet in medieval legends.

The regions which belong to the first of these classes are invariably placed in the West. Of this fact the most plausible explanation is, that all the ancient nations, when imagining the journey of the departed soul, had in their minds the journey of the sun, the one god

who dies daily; yet who has not really perished, but is only withdrawn from human sight. Nearly every tribe had some knowledge of a sea towards the West, with whose limits they were, in the early part of their history, quite unacquainted. Accordingly the soul-land was usually conceived as lying across the unexplored Western waters. The Egyptian abode of the dead was an exception to this rule, for not sea but desert forms the impassable western boundary of the Nile Valley. But none the less the Egyptian soul-land was placed in the West, though the spirit of the departed had to cross the desert, the "dark land of Apap," before arriving at the home of Osiris, the hidden sun.

There are two ways in which the setting of the sun into the west may strike the mind of the beholder. On the one hand, the sight of the end of a fine summer day, when the whole horizon is a sheet of vivid colour and the sea is divided by a golden path, calls up ideas of a land of glory where the sun-god rests after the labours of the day. On the other hand, after a day of mist and tempest, when the sun has seemed to wrestle with the black clouds, and finally sinks, swallowed up by them, into a dark and stormy sea, the sight of his end suggests only gloomy thoughts. So we get the double idea of the West, — as the bright Elysian plain or the garden of the Hesperides; and, on the other hand, as the dim shadowy land where the disembodied souls spend an aimless and hopeless existence.

Both these ideas appear in the Homeric poems. Although in the 'Iliad' the "dark home of Hades" is certainly below the earth, yet

when Ulysses visits the shades, he does not descend, but meets them on the misty shore of the land of the dead. Moreover, it is now generally allowed that Mr Gladstone is wrong in placing this land in the East, and that its real situation, in accordance with all Aryan ideas, is in the West, or perhaps North-west. Although in the Homeric poems the gloomy view of the after-life, which allots a colourless and unhappy existence to the souls of the greatest heroes, Achilles, Ajax, and their fellows, as much as to the souls of the common herd, is generally found, yet the more cheerful aspect of the West is shown in at least one passage, where *Prôteus* prophesies to *Menelaus* that his last end will be to come to "the Elysian plain and the ends of the earth, where abides the fair-haired *Rhadamanthus*; where life is easy for mortals; where is no snow nor storm nor rain, but always the ocean sends up the cooling breath of the west wind,"—a description well known as copied by *Lucretius* and *Tennyson*.

In *Hesiod* we first find this Western land mentioned by the name which afterwards became its proper title, *Μακάρων νῆσος*. Speaking of the heroes of the *Thèban* and *Trojan* wars, he makes *Zeus* bear them away after death, "to have their life and their abode apart from men, so that they dwell undisturbed in the islands of the blessed, by the deep-flowing ocean, where the fruitful earth brings forth her harvests thrice a-year."

A similar picture is found in the *Olympian odes* of *Pindar*, who speaks of the island of the blessed, round which the ocean breezes blow—where earth and water alike blaze with golden flowers, and the just dwell wreathed with garlands, beneath the gentle sway of *Rhadamanthus*.

After *Pindar* it is unnecessary to

mention the numerous allusions to this Western land which are found in the Greek poets. It seems, however, to be different from *Leuké*, which would appear to have been a sort of private earthly Paradise for the hero *Achilles*. Before the extent of the *Euxine* was known, he was supposed to inhabit an island in its extreme west, where he was united to *Helen*, and was accustomed to drive his chariot along the smooth promontory called *Achilleôs Dromos*.

When the *Euxine* was explored, the idea vanished, or rather shrank into the worship of *Achilles* as ruler of the sea at the colony of *Olbia*, the place nearest to the legendary position of *Leuké*.

After a time there came the materialising age of ancient history—that in which all the old legendary spots were fitted with places in the real lands of the Western Mediterranean, when *Phæacia* became *Corcyra*, and *Sicily* the dwelling of the *Cyclops*. At this time the isles of the blessed were placed outside the Straits of *Gibraltar*. But some centuries later, about B.C. 100, actual islands of pleasant aspect were discovered in that direction. Hence these which we now call the *Cape de Verde Islands* got the name of *Fortunatæ Insulæ*: and though no one asserted that they were inhabited by the souls of the just, yet the old wonders of the isles of the blessed were related of them; and we read of their perpetual spring, and the three harvests a-year which they produced. The accounts of these islands in sober geographers which survived into the middle ages, were certainly one of the reasons which induced the exploration of the Western sea.

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans succeeded to the rule of a world which had been explored; and except in a few allusions in the poets

and in Pliny, manifestly borrowed from the Greek, we do not find the islands of the blessed in their old sense mentioned till a very late date. Strange to say, however, among the very last of the Roman authors, as if we were coming on the shadow which the approaching middle ages cast before them, we find the old Western spirit-land of the 'Odyssey' reappearing. In Claudian we meet with the following passage: "There is a land, where the farthest end of Gaul stretches out into the ocean, where Ulysses is said to have invoked the silent folk with libations of blood. Here, even now, the pitiful wailing of the souls is heard as they flit past, and the peasants see pale shapes, the forms of the dead, taking their way from earth."

This allusion is explained by the longer passage on the same subject found in the Byzantine writer Procopius, who flourished under Justinian in the sixth century:—

"Opposite the north-western coast of Gaul," he writes, "there is a large island called Brittia, no other than England; it is divided into two parts by a wall stretching north and south. East of the wall is a pleasant land which is occupied by the Britons, Angles, and Frisians. What the land to the west is like, no one knows, for its air is deadly to breathe, and any one who passes the wall instantly expires. Now on the extreme north-west coast of Gaul," he continues, "there dwell certain fishermen, subject to the Franks, but excused from all tribute on account of the strange duty which they perform.

"Every night one of these fishermen, in rotation, is roused from sleep by a gentle tapping at his door, and a low voice calls him to come down to the beach. There lie dark vessels, to all appearance empty, but deep in the water, as if weighed down by a heavy burden. Pushing off, the fishermen arrive at the coast of Brittia in one night, though it was on ordinary occasions six days' journey from Gaul. During the voyage they hear the sound

of voices in the boat, but no intelligible words, only a subdued whispering. Arrived at the strange coast, they hear the names called over, and different voices answering to them, while they felt the boat gradually growing lighter; at last the roll-call ceased, and they were wafted back to their country with the same miraculous speed with which they had left."

Such is the last trace of the old soul-land which we meet in classical literature.

In its next appearance the earthly Paradise is entirely changed, and in Christian hands has ceased to be the habitation of departed spirits, and has shifted altogether its position on the earth. So greatly is its character altered, that many authorities would derive the medieval legends dealing with it, not from any pagan source, but entirely from the literal interpretations of the Bible which obtained in the middle ages. It hardly seems to be due to the principle enunciated at the beginning; and only in its wider developments is it influenced by the old Greek or Keltic beliefs. The true and orthodox terrestrial Paradise of the middle ages lay, not across the mysterious Western ocean, but in the equally mysterious lands of the sun-rising. It was universally identified with the Garden of Eden, in which Adam and Eve had been placed; and it was therefore impossible to seek it in any other quarter than the East. Now in medieval times the limits of the known world were shrunken far within the boundaries known to the later Roman geographers, Ptolemy, Strabo, and their fellows. In the twelfth or thirteenth century the Western world knew almost exactly as much, or rather as little, of Asia as Herodotus had known 1600 years before. The very stories which the father of history related of Indians and gold-producing ants, of griffins and

Arimaspi, had returned to their old localities in Central Asia, though in Roman days they had for some time continually receded further and further into the unknown North-east. Now again, as in the fifth century before Christ, men believed that beyond an India of no great extent, there lay no more inhabited lands, but only desert and sea. But unlike the ancients, the medievals placed in the furthest part of this region the earthly Paradise, either as an oasis in an expanse of rocks and sands, or as an island in an unnavigable ocean. Sometimes we read of it as inaccessible by reason of lands of mist and darkness, or insurmountable precipices; sometimes it is tempestuous seas or rivers which bar the way. But beyond them, if a man could but penetrate, he would find the Eden where our first father had dwelt, where rise the four mysterious rivers, and where grows every tree that is pleasant to the sight or good for food.

"There," says Neckam, "is a beautiful land where whole tracts are overgrown with the noble vine; there are clear springs, and groves watered with pleasant streams. Glorious is the fruit which enriches its gardens, and no sterile tree can grow in its soil. Never do storms come near it, nor violent winds, but there always blows a gentle breeze. Thither never came the waters of the all-destroying Flood."

"In that Paradise," says in a more prosaic strain the author of the '*Polychronicon*,' "is everything that is congruent to life. It hath salubrity and wholesomeness, for it enjoyeth an equal temperance, feeling neither coldness nor heat, insomuch that nothing that has life may in any wise die without it. In testimony whereof, Enoch and Elias wait yet therein, having the bodies with which they left this life still uncorrupt. Moreover, that place has all pleasantness, for it is the store-house of all that is fair, where no tree ever loseth its leaves, and no flower withereth. There is mirth and sweetness from the fruit

and trees that grow there, for every tree that is therein is sweet to eat and fair to see. And there is security, for no harm may come near it, nor even did the water of the great Flood come nigh."

Thus far all the authorities coincide; but there were certain points in the earthly Paradise which gave rise to dire controversies. Various authors give various situations for it. In some it is a great island lying south and east of "Inde the Great," apparently occupying the place of Ceylon. Thus it appears in the "*Hereford Mappa Mundi*" as a circular island enclosed by a wall, lying just opposite to the mouth of the Ganges. But a little later, when Ceylon was more or less known, it receded to a continental position somewhere in China. Still later, when Europe had heard of Cathay and the Great Khan, the insular theory was revived; and as lying south of China and east of India, we must identify the final position of Eden with Sumatra, Java, or some of the islands in that part of the world.

Here lay Paradise in the early fifteenth century, and from this spot it vanished into nothingness when in the end of that century the voyages of the Portuguese and Spaniards revealed both East and West, and banished from the world numbers of the old myths which had survived for so many ages. Vasco de Gama, Columbus, and Magellan destroyed not only the impassability of the Cape of Storms, the unlimited breadth of the Atlantic, and the unorthodoxy of a belief in antipodes, but also the beautiful old idea of the earthly Paradise. Men might still sail to seek Ophir, or the North-west Passage, or El Dorado, but no room was left on earth for the terrestrial Eden. If even we find it mentioned in books of the sixteenth century, it is to discuss where *was*

the Paradise of Genesis, not where ~~is~~ the beautiful land in which the fourteenth century believed.

In the vague and misty ideas which were entertained in the middle ages about Eastern geography, a little disagreement about the exact *position* of Paradise was not likely to cause very hot disputes. But it was otherwise concerning the shape of that locality: here the wise geographers and chroniclers had their own inner consciousness to draw on, and three sets of views were put forth, whose supporters argued angrily against each other's suppositions. Now no one doubted that the terrestrial Paradise was not touched by the Flood (for, said they, if it had been, we should have been told of it), and that it was quite or almost inaccessible to man. The oldest way of explaining these two facts was by making Paradise a pillar-shaped mountain, with a table-land on its summit, but with steep and inaccessible sides. So great was its height, that we are assured that it all but touched the orbit of the moon. This being the case, we can easily understand that it was undisturbed by the Flood; for although the waters rose forty fathoms above the highest hills, the summit of the mountain of Paradise was forty fathoms above the highest limit of the Deluge. Adding these eighty fathoms to the highest mountain known to a twelfth-century chronicler, we can obtain an idea of the distance from the earth at which the moon was supposed to revolve, for Paradise *very nearly* touches the moon's orbit. Allowing 20,000 feet altogether as a fair margin, we cannot but think that the twelfth century was a little weak in its astronomy; indeed we may be deeply thankful that its calculations are not exactly true—for who can tell what dreadful results might not follow

if the moon came into collision with Mount Everest, or any other elevation rising a little above the height which was allowed to Paradise?

The same school of geographers who held this view on the moon-orbit, maintained that the world was not a globe, but a mass of land, of various heights in different places, which rests upon the face of a limitless ocean. They argued that Scripture speaks of "the waters under the earth," and that this would be an incorrect description if the ocean merely formed part of the surface of a terrestrial globe. The earth must, therefore, be a body placed upon the level face of the circumfluent ocean. Moreover, so small did they imagine the world to be, that they objected to the globe theory that the mountains of the world, and more especially the mountain of Paradise, would prevent the earth from being a perfect figure. So Neckam writes:—

"Ausi sunt veteres terram censere rotundam,

Quamvis emineat montibus illa suis.

Quamvis deliciis ornatus apex Paradisi
Lunarem tangit vertice pæne globum."

It was the same school who deduced from Ezekiel v. 5 the fact, that a circle drawn from the centre of Jerusalem, with the radius to the extreme west of Spain, would exactly embrace the whole land of the world; for was it not written, "This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations round about;" and "God is King of old, working salvation in the middle of the earth"? So map-making was simplified or complicated (opinions may differ on the subject) by making all the earth centre round Judea, to the sad distortion of outlying peninsulas like Norway or India.

The second school of geographers were prepared to admit that the world was round, and maintained that Paradise was no lofty moun-

tain, but a spacious country, "not less in size than Egypt or India"; for, said they, if Adam had not sinned, it would have had to contain the whole human race, and must therefore be of no mean size. Again, the idea that Paradise was the highest point of earth, was displeasing to them.

"We must not think," says Higden, "as do some men of small intellect and little experience, that Paradise is far away from all habitable lands, and reaches up to the orbit of the moon—for neither reason nor nature allows this belief. Neither air nor water could support the weight of such a burden. Moreover, the element of fire, as all wise men agree, fills a space between our lower air and the orbit of the moon. The summit, then, of Paradise would be in the region of fire, where no vegetable can possibly exist, nor human life. How, then, can Adam or the tree of life have been there? And again, if the place were so high, its summit would continually be getting between us and the moon, and causing eclipses, especially in Eastern lands. No one, however, has ever seen or heard of such an eclipse. Besides this, four rivers rise in Paradise, which flow through well-known countries; therefore it must be contiguous to our habitable world, or the rivers could never reach us. The rational view of Paradise is, that it is a large fair region in the extreme East, only separated from the homes of men by that fiery wall, the sword of the cherubim, of whom we read in Genesis."

So much for the views of home-staying sages on the terrestrial Eden. Let us now turn to the testimony of a traveller. Credulous and even inventive as was the author of 'Sir John Mandeville's Travels,' there seems no reason to doubt that he penetrated some distance into the East. Thus he attained some knowledge both of India and of Cathay, and therefore localised it in neither, but to the south-east, "hard by the land of Prester John." He is gracious enough to confess that he never

went there himself, both because of the distance and of his own unworthiness, but gives us some accounts drawn from conversations with those who had striven to approach it:—

"Paradys," he had learnt, "is enclosed all about with a wall, of which men know not the material. For it is covered all over with mosse as it seemeth, and is not of the natur of stone. And that wall stretcheth from the south to the north, and hath but one entry, that is closed with fire burning, so that men may not enter. And ye should understand that no man may by any means approach to that Paradys. For by land no man may go for the wild beasts that are in the deserts, and for the high mountains and huge rocks, and for the dark places that be there right many. And by the rivers may no man go, for that the water runneth rudely and sharply, because that it cometh down outrageously from the high places above. And it runneth in so great waves that no ship may not row nor sail against it; and the water roareth so, and maketh so huge noise and so great tempest, that no man may hear other in the ship, though he cry with all the might he have, in the highest voice that he may. Many great lords have assayed with great will many times for to pass by that river toward Paradys, with full great companies; but they might not speed in their voyage: and many died for weariness of rowing against the strong waves; and many became blind, and many deaf, for the dashing and noise of the water; and some were perished and lost within the waves,—so that no mortalle man may approach to that place without special grace of God: therefore of Paradys can I say you no more."

Among these great lords whom Sir John Mandeville mentions, was, according to Paludanus, no less a person than Alexander the Great himself. Indeed we are told that his Eastern conquests were especially undertaken for the purpose of attaining to the earthly Paradise. When he had reached

India, and was nearing his goal, some of his soldiers captured a venerable old man in a ravine, and were about to conduct him to their king, when he said, "Go and announce to Alexander that it is in vain that he seeks Paradise: all his efforts will be fruitless, for the way of Paradise is humility, a way of which he knows nothing." And in truth Alexander could pursue his purpose no longer from that day, because of the mutiny of his soldiers, who would go no further from their native land.

We have found only one account of a man who was actually asserted to have entered the terrestrial Paradise. This is the tale of the Norwegian Eirek.¹ This saga of Eirek, however, hardly purports to be an actual itinerary, and was allowed even in the middle ages to be more of a religious novel than a sober narrative. Eirek, we are told, made a vow to find the earthly Paradise, and having obtained information as to its locality from the Byzantine Emperor, diligently sought for it to the east of India. At last, after passing through a gloomy forest, he came upon a narrow strait separating him from a very beautiful land. From his instructions he recognised that these were Paradise and the river Pison, and determined to cross the water, though the only mode of access to the distant shore was a narrow stone bridge, which was completely blocked up by a dragon of portentous size. The Norseman drew his sword and deliberately walked into the monster's mouth, which, to his surprise, did not close on him, but vanished. Thus he passed without obstacle to the further shore, where he found the usual characteristics of the earthly Paradise—undying flowers, marvellous fruits, clear rivulets, but no living being.

At last he came upon a sort of tower suspended in mid-air, to which access could be had by climbing a slender ladder. On ascending to this tower Eirek found a dinner thoughtfully prepared for him in one of its chambers, of which he partook, and soon fell asleep. In his sleep he saw in a vision his guardian angel, who promised him a safe return to Norway, but added that, at the end of ten years, he would be carried away from the earth never to return again. Eirek retraced his steps over the bridge, and through the simulacrum of the dragon, which was apparently nothing more than a show to appal the faint-hearted. After long travelling he came back to his native town of Drontheim, and told his story, to the great edification of all true Christian folk. Ten years after, as he went to prayer one morning, he was caught up and carried away by God's Spirit, and was never again seen of men.

The saga of Eirek is evidently in great part allegorical: we seem to recognise the narrow strait of death which separates the Christian pilgrim from Paradise; and in the dragon, death itself, terrible to the coward, but which, when resolutely faced by the brave man, turns out to be an empty horror with no power to harm.

There are yet two more points connected with the terrestrial Eden which must be mentioned before we pass on to the consideration of the Western deathless land, in which there was also a belief in medieval times. Firstly, as to the rivers of Paradise mentioned in Genesis, the geographers universally identified the Pison with the Ganges, and the Gihon with the Nile; but how to bring the sources of these two rivers into

¹ See Baring-Gould's 'Curious Myths of the Middle Ages.'

juxtaposition with those of the Tigris and Euphrates was indeed a hard task. Those who maintained that Paradise was an island, generally explained the matter by alleging, that although the Ganges might *seem* to rise in North India, the Tigris in Armenia, and so on, yet really the first appearances of these rivers were not their sources. The real sources were in Paradise, from whence the water was conveyed in a mysterious kind of submarine and subterranean canal to the places where the rivers apparently take their rise.

Those who made Paradise continental had not quite such a hard task in their explanation. They made out that the Ganges, Euphrates, and Tigris actually flowed down from Paradise, over whose boundary they fell in a cataract, which finally divided into three streams. Moreover, they added that the roar of this cataract was so tremendous, that those who approached too near were usually rendered deaf for the rest of their life, and that the children of a tribe of savages who dwelt not far off, were even born deaf, from their ancestors having lived for generations near the cataract. The last thing which we must mention concerning the earthly Paradise is, that there was a difference of opinion as to whether the famous Phoenix lived *in* Paradise, or merely close to it. The former view was not so generally held as the latter. It was, however, supported by some who brought forward the passage of Claudian, who speaks of the dwelling of the Phoenix as the "green grove surrounded by circumfluent ocean, beyond the Indians, close to the sunrising." This might easily be identified with Paradise. The majority, however, placed the

home of the Phoenix close to but not within the terrestrial Eden. So we read that Alexander the Great, though he could never reach the earthly Paradise, did come upon the Phoenix in the most easterly point of his expedition, within the same grove where were the talking trees of the sun. So, too, Neckam places the bird in Panchæa in India; and in other authors it is found in its old Herodotean position in Arabia, where it appears in the "Hereford Mappa Mundi."

So much for the Eastern Paradise, the ancient seat of our first parents. We must now endeavour to give some ideas of a more hazy and mysterious land, the Western region of unending spring and perpetual youth, which Morris represents his seafarers as seeking in his poem "*The Earthly Paradise*." Although the voice of ecclesiastical tradition pronounced that in the East, and there alone, was the happy land to be sought, there was nevertheless a mass of legends which insisted on placing it in the West. A very large number of these stories are derived from Welsh or Irish sources, and it seems almost certain that they are not mere medieval inventions, but survivals of the old Keltic mythology. Like most other nations, the Kelts had imagined for themselves a soul-land across the Western ocean, and when they were converted to Christianity, and forbidden to look either for a heaven on earth, or for a Paradise in the West, they did not entirely give up their old belief, but merely modified it to a form which did not clash with the new religion. The Western land might not be the earthly Paradise, but none the less it might exist. Such was the true origin of the Land of Avilion or Avalon, the Isle of Apples, to which King Arthur was

borne away, and also of the long-sought Isle of St Brandan. Moreover, the King Arthur who was till lately acknowledged as historical (I mean the warlike West British prince, not the legendary monarch of all Britain), is now asserted by many writers to have been a Keltic demi-god long before he became a Damnonian king. Sad to say, the all-devouring Sun-myth-theory has laid claim to him, as it has to most other heroes, and we are invited to recognise in him the sun sailing into the Western shades in his golden boat, or wrestling at his end with the dark clouds of evening. Arthur, then, must be regarded as a god brought down by euhemerising means to the form of a man, not as a man raised by exaggerated conditions to an over-important place in history. Moreover, if we take this view, certain points in the Arthur of the romances seem well explained by it. Thus we can understand his mysterious and apparently superhuman birth, the strange legend which tells how he was not really King Uther's son, but was brought to Tintagel by the magic ship, and left on the shore a new-born babe in Merlin's hands. Thus we can see how he is claimed as brother by the Queen Morgan le Fay, who is certainly no mere human being. Thus it is only right that this mysterious sister should bear him away, after that last dim battle in the West, to some fair land beyond the sea, in the barge wherein Sir Bedivere placed him. He is no man merely departing "to heal him of his deadly wound," but a superhuman being returning to the place from which he came.

And as Arthur is no mere Damnonian king, so Avilion is no mere Glastonbury, as the materialising chronicler would make it. It is the old Keltic soul-land beyond the Western ocean. We may notice, in

confirmation of this, that the medieval chroniclers of Glastonbury, when they identify it with Avilion, generally add that the Welsh call the place Inysvitrin, the Isle of Glass. Now in the Irish legends a hill or island of glass is invariably mentioned as one of the marvellous features of Fathinnis, the land of departed souls. It is noticeable that the Morgan le Fay, the lady of Avilion, has not from a goddess become an evil spirit, as did Hörsel the goddess of the German Venus berg; she is neither angel nor fiend, but a fairy, superhuman without being evil.

After the Arthurian legend had become popular, Avilion was made the resting-place of other heroes. Ogier the Dane came thither, at the end of his life, to rest after all his toils in the castle of Morgan le Fay. So did the famous Paladins, and even, as some say, the great Kaiser Charles himself. In short, it became a sort of Elysian Fields for all the heroes whom the medieval mind could admire, but at the same time could not conceive as fulfilling the ideal of the Christian saint. The Christian heaven above was the fit place for the ecstatic adoration of holy men and martyrs, but it was not suited for the heroes of the romances; for them there was imagined a more earthly resting-place, a fairy-land where they might for ever enjoy youth and quiet repose.

After Avilion, the most famous legendary Western land was undoubtedly the Isle of St Brandan. Brandan, who is a mythical personage, is said to have been an Irish monk, and abbot of Birr, at some time in the seventh century. He was induced to undertake his marvellous voyage by a monk, who told him that he had sailed from Ireland till he had at last come to Paradise, which was an island full of joy and mirth,

where the earth was as bright as the sun, and everything was glorious, and the half-year he had spent there had slipped by as a few moments. On his return to his abbey his garments were still fragrant with the odours of Paradise. Excited by this story, Brandan embarked in a vessel with some of his monks. We are told in the oldest form of the legend that he sailed due east from Ireland; but as this must have necessarily brought him to England, or some part of North-western Europe, we soon find his voyage transferred to the West. The marvels which he met were extraordinary. Among the first was the astounding spectacle of Judas Iscariot afloat upon an iceberg, who explained to the saint that for one day in the year he was permitted to cool himself from the fires of hell, in consideration of a single good deed which he had performed on earth. Matthew Arnold has versified this episode in the Brandan legend. After passing through a sea filled with icebergs and vexed with storms, Brandan reached a more clement region, where he first came on an island inhabited by sheep alone, which, in consequence of the luxuriance of the herbage, grew as large as oxen. Soon after, the saint came to another island, where he found to his surprise an abbey of twenty-four monks, who informed him that in that isle was ever fair weather, and none of them had ever been sick since they came thither. Yet further on was a third island, where was, in the words of the legend, "a fair well, and a great tree full of boughs, and on every bough sat a fair bird, and they sat so thicke on the tree that no leaf of it might be seen, the number of the birds being very great, and they sange so merrily that it was a heavenly noise to

hear. Anon one of the birds flew from the tree to Brandan, and with flickering of his wings made a full merry noise, like a fiddle, that the saint never heard so joyful a melodie. Then did the holy man command the bird to tell him why they sat so thicke upon the tree." The answer of the bird was surprising: he explained that he and his companions were once angels—namely, those of the heavenly host who in the time of Lucifer's rebellion refused to assist either God or His enemies. In punishment for this they were doing penance in the form of birds, but, after many years, were to be readmitted to their lost estate. Leaving the island of birds, the voyagers came to another land, "the fairest country," we are told; "that any man might see—which was so clear and so bright that it was an heavenly sight to behold; and all the trees were charged with ripe fruit and herbes full of flowers,—in which land they walked forty days and could not see the end thereof; there was alway day and never night, and the country was attemperate, neither too hot nor too cold." At last, however, Brandan and his companions came to a broad river, on the banks of which stood a young man, apparently an angel, who told him that this stream divided the world in twain, and that no living man might cross it. On the further bank they could see the true Paradise, but might not approach it; wherefore they retraced their steps, and set sail for Ireland. They reached their country in safety, but were surprised to hear that they had been absent, not a few months, but seven long years.

Such is the legend of St Brandan, and the existence of these marvellous isles to which he had attained was firmly believed for centuries. Sometimes men declared

that they were not far from the west of Ireland, and could be seen in clear weather; but whenever an expedition was fitted out to reach them, they somehow seemed to disappear. More frequently the islands were described as lying beyond the Canaries. There lay, as the Portuguese declared, the island which had been sometimes lighted upon by accident, but which when sought could never be found. Its existence was regarded as so certain that we are told of one Portuguese who received a formal grant of it "when it should be found." And when the Portuguese Crown ceded to Spain its rights over the Canaries, the island of St Brandan was specially included, being described as "the island which has not yet been found." In 1526, 1570, and again in 1605, expeditions set sail from the Canaries to discover this land; but all met with uniform failure. Still the belief died hard, and did not become extinct for many years after the third of these unsuccessful voyages. Any one who has the curiosity to look over the old atlases of the seventeenth century, will find, as late as 1630, the Isle of Brandan delineated as an island of no great size, lying west of Ireland and north-west of the Canaries; it is even said that in one map published as late as the beginning of the eighteenth century, this fabulous land is still indicated.

Another of the mythical Western countries was the Isle of the Seven Cities. This, however, was not of Keltic, but of Spanish invention; and the legend which treats of their supposed discovery is of very late date; the name of its hero also makes us suspect that it is allegorical. Ferdinando da Alma, we are told, set sail from Lisbon, moved by reports of the finding of the Fortunate Islands. He met with storms which carried him far

to the west of any known land. When the storm ceased after many days, he found himself near a large island, on which he descried a harbour and a city. As he sailed into this port he was met by a boat whose crew, to his great surprise, addressed him in Spanish. He asked them who they were, and received for answer that they were descendants of the Spanish who in the eighth century fled from the Moors across the sea. Seven bands of fugitives, they said, headed by seven bishops, had reached this island, where they had founded seven cities, of which the port at which Da Alma had arrived was one. The discoverer was invited to accompany his newly found fellow-countrymen ashore, and was introduced by them to the magistrates of the place, who treated him with the greatest courtesy. Everything in the town—costume, buildings, language—bore an old-world stamp, and the inhabitants had been cut off from all intercourse with other men for seven hundred years. They were most anxious for news of Spain, and on hearing that all that country except Granada was now Christian, they mingled congratulations with regret at the reconquest not being complete. At evening some of the islanders undertook to row Da Alma back to his ship, which was anchored at the harbour's mouth. The fatigues of the day and the monotonous song of the rowers caused him at last to fall asleep. When he awoke he found himself laid on a bed in the cabin of a ship, and in a state of great bodily prostration. On inquiring where he was, he was told that he was on board a Portuguese vessel trading between the Azores and Lisbon. He had been picked up, as the captain explained, in a state of delirium, from an old and leaky boat which

had floated by the course of the ship. For many days he had raved, and he was only now returned to consciousness. Barely convalescent, Da Alma was landed at Lisbon, which somehow seemed strange to his eyes; the town appeared larger, the buildings in many cases altered. But when he knocked at the door of his own house, he was refused admittance. He stated who he was, but the occupant of the house replied that he knew for certain that no person of his name had lived there for fifty years. Astonished at this, the returned traveller began to make inquiries, and found to his horror that not less than a hundred years had elapsed since he set sail for the Fortunate Islands. He had left Portugal in the fifteenth century, and now found himself living in the sixteenth. All his friends, the whole of his own generation had passed away, and the unfortunate man, after relating his tale, did not long survive. The island which Da Alma was said to have found, like that of St Brandan, was long sought, and retained a place in geography till the middle of the seventeenth century. It is from this legend that William Morris seems to have drawn the idea of the Western country to which his seafarers finally came. There we get the tale of an old-world civilisation existing in a community long cut off from intercourse from other nations; there, too, the anxious longing for news of the ancient fatherland which the islanders had left behind in the East: only, instead of Christian Spaniards, Mr Morris's people are Greeks, and worshippers of the old gods of Olympus.

There is yet remaining one more belief which ought to be mentioned in this place—that of the fountain of youth. The original

locality, it is true, was in the East, as is shown in the fabulous letter of Prester John to the Byzantine Emperor Manuel; indeed Sir John Mandeville says that he found it himself in Ceylon, only it was not true that one draught of it gave perpetual youth—this was only acquired by a regular course of several years' drinking. Sir John had only time to try it for two days, found it pleasant to the taste, and thought he felt all the better for it, but experienced no occult effect. However, in the fourteenth century the fountain migrated to the most western of the Canaries. It was not even destroyed by the discovery of America, but was only relegated to one of the Bahamas in the West Indies. Finally, it receded to the mainland of North America, and was sought by Soto in Florida. There, as was to be expected, it was not to be found, and it became obsolete long before the day of the final disappearance of St Brandan's Isle. Two more beliefs which attributed wonders to the West may be passed over as not bearing any relation to the earthly Paradise, though proceeding probably from similar sources in the old Keltic mythology. These were St Patrick's Purgatory, a sort of subterranean soul-land, modified by Christianity into an entrance to the region of purification by suffering; and the island in a lake of Ulster in which no one could die. There, as we read, when the inhabitants reached extreme old age and became nothing but a burden to themselves, they had to be carried to the mainland before their spirit could depart. This is no doubt another perverted form of the old belief in the deathless land of the West.

In conclusion, there is one more view which we venture, with all deference, to suggest. Surely the medieval folk were much

the happier for all these ideas. Our own map of the world is dreadfully deficient in romance: it is really very hard to feel an eager interest in the exploration of Central Africa, or the discovery of the South Pole. If some traveller does trace the upper course of the Congo, or penetrate up Baffin's Bay to the open Arctic Sea, we do not expect to gain any great good from it, or to hear any particularly startling news about these regions. It will be the difficulty of the task, not its results, that will direct attention to them. The discovery of a few more tribes of thoroughly uninteresting negroes, or a few more ice-blocked bays, has nothing in it to stir the heart of the world. We look for no marvels to be unveiled, no great problems that are to be solved. The naturalist may indeed be gladdened by the knowledge of a new species of Arctic gull, or a few varieties of tropical plants; the collector of folk-lore may rejoice over some new and original negro funeral ceremonies; the merchant may find a new market for his cottons, —but these things will not prove very interesting to the mass of mankind.

Now in the middle ages everything was exactly the reverse of this. The greater part of the world's surface was still unknown. There was hardly anything on which the adventurous traveller might not come. He might reach populous lands and cities, rich far beyond the ideas of the European world; he might, on the other hand, come to the land of the griffin and the flying serpent, or, as Shakespeare puts it in 'Othello,' to

"antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose
heads touch heaven,"

and to

"The Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose
heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders."

There was a glorious uncertainty in their voyages of discovery: one man would find the passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope, or kingdoms like Mexico or Peru; another would follow after equally uncertain rumours, and meet nothing but disaster, or even never be heard of again. Discovery could not possibly manage to be uninteresting in those days; and as if there were not enough real marvels to be found, the legends were continually holding out fabulous ones for the adventurous to seek. Now of all the legends, it can hardly be disputed that the legends of the earthly Paradise were the most attractive. Men might not desire at once to leave their present life for the search after the beautiful land of endless rest without death; but still it was a comfortable feeling to know that such a land *did* exist. If a man's life went hopelessly wrong, if he was in despair and felt that the world was out of joint, there was still this refuge left for him; it only needed a little more perseverance and courage than that of the last voyager who had *almost* reached the happy land, and then there would be for ever a quiet and blissful repose in some Avilion of the Western sea. We do not say that the men of the fourteenth or fifteenth century were *happier* than we of the nineteenth; but certainly it *was* something not to be bound down by the prosaic bonds of that knowledge which forbids us to dream that we may

"be at rest,
And follow the shining sinking sun
down into the shining West."

BOURGONEF.—PART I.

CHAPTER I.—AT A TABLE D'HÔTE.

AT the close of February 1848 I was in Nuremberg. My original intention had been to pass a couple of days there, on my way to Munich; that being, I thought, as much time as could reasonably be spared for so small a city, beckoned as my footsteps were to the Bavarian Athens, of whose glories of ancient art and German Renaissance I had formed expectations the most exaggerated—expectations fatal to any perfect enjoyment, and certain to be disappointed, however great the actual merit of Munich might be. But after two days at Nuremberg, I was so deeply interested in its antique sequestered life, the charms of which had not been deadened by previous anticipations, that I resolved to remain there until I had mastered every detail, and knew the place by heart.

I have a story to tell which will move amidst tragic circumstances of too engrossing a nature to be disturbed by archaeological interests, and shall not, therefore, minutely describe here what I observed at Nuremberg, although no adequate description of that wonderful city has yet fallen in my way. To readers unacquainted with this antique place it will be enough to say that in it the old German life seems still to a great extent rescued from the all-devouring, all-equalising tendencies of European civilisation. The houses are either of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, or are constructed after those ancient models. The citizens have preserved much of the simple manners and customs of their ancestors. The hurrying feet of commerce and curiosity pass rapidly by, leaving

it sequestered from the agitations and the turmoils of metropolitan existence. It is as quiet as a village. During my stay there rose in its quiet streets the startled echoes of horror at a crime unparalleled in its annals, which, gathering increased horror from the very peacefulness and serenity of the scene, arrested the attention and the sympathy in a degree seldom experienced. Before narrating that, it will be necessary to go back a little, that my own connection with it may be intelligible, especially in the fanciful weaving together of remote conjectures which strangely involved me in the story.

The *table d'hôte* at the Bayerischer Hof had about thirty visitors—all, with one exception, of that local commonplace which escapes remark. Indeed this may almost always be said of *tables d'hôte*; though there is a current belief, which I cannot share, of a *table d'hôte* being very delightful—of “one being certain to meet pleasant people there.” It may be so. For many years I believed it was so. The general verdict received my assent. I had never met those delightful people, but was always expecting to meet them. Hitherto they had been conspicuous by their absence. According to my experience in Spain, France, and Germany, such dinners had been dreary, or noisy and vapid. If the guests were English, they were chillingly silent, or surlily monosyllabic: to their neighbours they were frigid; amongst each other they spoke in low under-tones. And if the guests were foreigners, they were noisy, clattering, and chattering, foolish

for the most part, and vivaciously commonplace. I don't know which made me feel most dreary. The predominance of my countrymen gave the dinner the gaiety of a funeral; the predominance of the Mossoo gave it the fatigue of got-up enthusiasm or trivial expansiveness. To hear strangers imparting the scraps of erudition and connoisseurship which they had that morning gathered from their *valets de place* and guide-books, or describing the sights they had just seen, to you, who either saw them yesterday or would see them tomorrow, could not be permanently attractive. My mind refuses to pasture on such food with gusto. I cannot be made to care what the Herr Baron's sentiments about Albert Dürer or Lucas Cranach may be. I can digest my *rindfleisch* without the aid of the *com-mis voyageur's* criticisms on Gothic architecture. This may be my misfortune. In spite of the Italian blood which I inherit, I am a shy man—shy as the purest Briton. But, like other shy men, I make up in obstinacy what may be deficient in expansiveness. I can be frightened into silence, but I won't be dictated to. You might as well attempt the persuasive effect of your eloquence upon a snail who has withdrawn into his shell at your approach, and will not emerge till his confidence is restored. To be told that I *must* see this, and ought to go there, because my casual neighbour was *charmé*, has never presented itself to me as an adequate motive.

From this you readily gather that I am severely taciturn at a *table d'hôte*. I refrain from joining in the "delightful conversation" which flies across the table; and know that my reticence is attributed to "insular pride." It is really and truly nothing but impatience of com-

monplace. I thoroughly enjoy good talk; but, ask yourself, what are the probabilities of hearing that rare thing in the casual assemblage of forty or fifty people, not brought together by any natural affinities or interests, but thrown together by the accident of being in the same district, and in the same hotel? They are not "forty feeding like one," but like forty. They have no community, except the community of commonplace. No; *tables d'hôte* are not delightful, and do not gather interesting people together.

Such has been my extensive experience. But this at Nuremberg is a conspicuous exception. At that table there was one guest who, on various grounds, personal and incidental, remains the most memorable man I ever met. From the first he riveted my attention in an unusual degree. He had not, as yet, induced me to emerge from my habitual reserve, for in truth, although he riveted my attention, he inspired me with a strange feeling of repulsion. I could scarcely keep my eyes from him; yet, except the formal bow on sitting down and rising from the table, I had interchanged no sign of fellowship with him. He was a young Russian, named Bourgonef, as I at once learned; rather handsome, and peculiarly arresting to the eye, partly from an air of settled melancholy, especially in his smile, the amiability of which seemed breaking from under clouds of grief, and still more so from the mute appeal to sympathy in the empty sleeve of his right arm, which was looped to the breast-button of his coat. His eyes were large and soft. He had no beard or whisker, and only delicate moustaches. The sorrow, quiet but profound, the amiable smile, and the lost arm, were appealing

details which at once arrested attention and excited sympathy. But to me this sympathy was mingled with a vague repulsion, occasioned by a certain falseness in the amiable smile, and a furtiveness in the eyes, which I saw—or fancied—and which, with an inexplicable reserve, forming as it were the impregnable citadel in the centre of his outwardly polite and engaging manner, gave me something of that vague impression which we express by the words “instinctive antipathy.”

It was, when calmly considered, eminently absurd. To see one so young, and by his conversation so highly cultured and intelligent, condemned to early helplessness, his food cut up for him by a servant, as if he were a child, naturally engaged pity, and, on the first day, I cudgelled my brains during the greater part of dinner in the effort to account for his lost arm. He was obviously not a military man: the unmistakable look and stoop of a student told that plainly enough. Nor was the loss one dating from early life: he used his left arm too awkwardly, for the event not to have had a recent date. Had it anything to do with his melancholy? Here was a topic for my vagabond imagination, and endless were the romances woven by it during my silent dinner. For the reader must be told of one peculiarity in me, because to it much of the strange complications of my story are due; complications into which a mind less active in weaving imaginary hypotheses to interpret casual and trifling facts would never have been drawn. From my childhood I have been the victim of my constructive imagination, which has led me into many mistakes and some scrapes; because, instead of contenting myself with plain, ob-

vious evidence, I have allowed myself to frame hypothetical interpretations, which, to acts simple in themselves, and explicable on ordinary motives, have assigned hidden and extraordinary motives, rendering the simple-seeming acts portentous. With bitter pangs of self-reproach I have at times discovered that a long and plausible history constructed by me, relating to personal friends, has crumbled into a ruin of absurdity, by the disclosure of the primary misconception on which the whole history was based. I have gone, let us say, on the supposition that two people were secretly lovers; on this supposition my imagination has constructed a whole scheme to explain certain acts, and one fine day I have discovered indubitably that the supposed lovers were not lovers, but confidants of their passions in other directions, and of course all my conjectures have been utterly false. The secret flush of shame at failure has not, however, prevented my falling into similar mistakes immediately after.

When, therefore, I hereafter speak of my “constructive imagination,” the reader will know to what I am alluding. It was already busy with Bourgonef. To it must be added that vague repulsion, previously mentioned. This feeling abated on the second day; but, although lessened, it remained powerful enough to prevent my speaking to him. Whether it would have continued to abate until it disappeared, as such antipathies often disappear, under the familiarities of prolonged intercourse, without any immediate appeal to my *amour propre*, I know not; but every reflective mind, conscious of being accessible to antipathies, will remember that one certain method of stifling them

is for the object to make some appeal to our interest or our vanity: in the engagement of these more powerful feelings, the antipathy is quickly strangled. At any rate it is so in my case, and was so now. On the third day, the conversation at table happening to turn, as it often turned, upon St Sebald's Church, a young Frenchman, who was criticising its architecture with fluent dogmatism, drew Bourgonef into the discussion, and thereby elicited such a display of accurate and extensive knowledge, no less than delicacy of appreciation, that we were all listening spell-bound. In the midst of this triumphant exposition the irritated vanity of the Frenchman could do nothing to regain his position but oppose a flat denial to a historical statement made by Bourgonef, backing his denial by the confident assertion, that "all the competent authorities" held with him. At this point Bourgonef appealed to me, and in that tone of deference so exquisitely flattering from one we already know to be superior, he requested my decision; observing that, from the manner in which he had seen me examine the details of the architecture, he could not be mistaken in his confidence that I was a connoisseur. All eyes were turned upon me. As a shy man, this made me blush; as a vain man, the blush was accompanied with delight. It might easily have happened that such an appeal, acting at once upon shyness and ignorance, would have inflamed my wrath; but the appeal happening to be directed on a point which I had recently investigated and thoroughly mastered, I was flattered at the opportunity of a victorious display.

The pleasure of my triumph diffused itself over my feelings to-

wards him who had been the occasion of it. The Frenchman was silenced; the general verdict of the company was too obviously on our side. From this time the conversation continued between Bourgonef and myself; and he not only succeeded in entirely dissipating my absurd antipathy—which I now saw to have been founded on purely imaginary grounds, for neither the falseness nor the furtiveness could now be detected—but he succeeded in captivating all my sympathy. Long after dinner was over, and the *salle* empty, we sat smoking our cigars, and discussing politics, literature, and art in that suggestive desultory manner which often gives a charm to casual acquaintances.

It was a stirring epoch, that of February 1848. The Revolution, at first so hopeful and soon to manifest itself in failure so disastrous, was hurrying to an outburst. France had been for many months agitated by cries of electoral reform, and by indignation at the corruption and scandals in high places. The Praslin murder, and the dishonour of M. Teste, terminated by suicide, had been interpreted as signs of the coming destruction. The political banquets given in various important cities had been occasions for inflaming the public mind, and to the far-seeing, these banquets were interpreted as the sounds of the tocsin. Louis Philippe had become odious to France, and contemptible to Europe. Guizot and Duchatel, the ministers of that day, although backed by a parliamentary majority on which they blindly relied, were unpopular, and were regarded as infatuated even by their admirers in Europe. The Spanish Marriages had all but led to a war with England. The Opposition, headed by Thiers and Odillon Bar-

rot, was strengthened by united action with the republican party, headed by Ledru Rollin, Marrast, Flocon, and Louis Blanc.

Bourgonef was an ardent republican. So was I; but my colour was of a different shade from his. He belonged to the Reds. My own dominant tendencies being artistic and literary, my dream was of a republic in which Intelligence would be the archon or ruler; and of course in such a republic, art and literature, as the highest manifestation of mind, would have the supreme direction. Do you smile, reader? I smile, now; but it was serious earnest with me then. It is unnecessary to say more on this point. I have said so much to render intelligible the stray link of communion which riveted the charm of my new acquaintance's conversation; there was both agreement enough and difference enough in our views to render our society mutually fascinating.

On retiring to my room that afternoon I could not help laughing at my absurd antipathy against Bourgonef. All his remarks had disclosed a generous, ardent, and refined nature. While my antipathy had specially fastened upon a certain falseness in his smile—a falseness the more poignantly hideous if it were falseness, because hidden amidst the wreaths of amiability—my delight in his conversation had specially justified itself by the truthfulness of his mode of looking at things. He seemed to be sincerity itself. There was,

indeed, a certain central reserve; but that might only be an integrity of pride; or it might be connected with painful circumstances in his history, of which the melancholy in his face was the outward sign.

That very evening my constructive imagination was furnished with a detail on which it was soon to be actively set to work. I had been rambling about the old fortifications, and was returning at nightfall through the old archway near Albert Dürer's house, when a man passed by me. We looked at each other in that automatic way in which men look when they meet in narrow places; and I felt, so to speak, a start of recognition in the eyes of the man who passed. Nothing else, in features or gestures, betrayed recognition or surprise. But although there was only that, it flashed from his eyes to mine like an electric shock. He passed. I looked back. He continued his way without turning. The face was certainly known to me; but it floated in a mist of confused memories.

I walked on slowly, pestering my memory with fruitless calls upon it, hopelessly trying to recover the place where I could have seen the stranger before. In vain memory travelled over Europe in concert-rooms, theatres, shops, and railway carriages. I could not recall the occasion on which those eyes had previously met mine. That they had met them I had no doubt. I went to bed with the riddle undiscovered.

CHAPTER II.—THE ECHOES OF MURDER.

Next morning Nuremberg was agitated with a horror such as can seldom have disturbed its quiet; a young and lovely girl had been

murdered. Her corpse was discovered at daybreak under the archway leading to the old fortifications. She had been stabbed to

the heart. No other signs of violence were visible; no robbery had been attempted.

In great cities, necessarily great centres of crime, we daily hear of murders; their frequency and remoteness leave us undisturbed. Our sympathies can only be deeply moved either by some scenic peculiarities investing the crime with unusual romance or unusual atrocity, or else by the more immediate appeal of direct neighbourly interest. The murder which is read of in the 'Times' as having occurred in Westminster, has seldom any special horror to the inhabitants of Islington or Oxford Street; but to the inhabitants of Westminster, and especially to the inhabitants of the particular street in which it was perpetrated, the crime assumes heart-shaking proportions. Every detail is asked for, and every surmise listened to, with feverish eagerness—is repeated and diffused through the crowd with growing interest. The family of the victim; the antecedents of the assassin, if he is known; or the conjectures pointing to the unknown assassin,—are eagerly discussed. All the trivial details of household care or domestic fortunes, all the items of personal gossip, become invested with a solemn and affecting interest. Pity for the victim and survivors mingle and alternate with fierce cries for vengeance on the guilty. The whole street becomes one family, commingled by an energetic sympathy, united by one common feeling of compassion and wrath.

In villages, and in cities so small as Nuremberg, the same community of feeling is manifested. The town became as one street. The horror spread like a conflagration, the sympathy surged and swelled like a tide. Every one felt a personal interest in the event, as if

the murder had been committed at his own door. Never shall I forget that wail of passionate pity, and that cry for the vengeance of justice, which rose from all sides of the startled city. Never shall I forget the hurry, the agitation, the feverish restlessness, the universal communicativeness, the volunteered services, the eager suggestion, surging round the house of the unhappy parents. Herr Lehfeldt, the father of the unhappy girl, was a respected burgher, known to almost every one. His mercer's shop was the leading one of the city. A worthy pious man, somewhat strict, but of irreproachable character; his virtues, no less than those of his wife, and of his only daughter Lieschen—now, alas! for ever snatched from their yearning eyes—were canvassed everywhere, and served to intensify the general grief. That such a calamity should have fallen on a household so estimable, seemed to add fuel to the people's wrath. Poor Lieschen! her pretty, playful ways—her opening prospects, as the only daughter of parents so well to do and so kind—her youth and abounding life—these were detailed with impassioned fervour by friends, and repeated by strangers who caught the tone of friends, as if they, too, had known and loved her. But amidst the surging uproar of this sea of many voices no one clear voice of direction could be heard; no clue given to the clamorous bloodhounds to run down the assassin.

Cries had been heard in the streets that night at various parts of the town, which, although then interpreted as the quarrels of drunken brawlers, and the conflicts of cats, were now confidently asserted to have proceeded from the unhappy girl in her death-struggle. But none of these cries

had been heard in the immediate neighbourhood of the archway. All the inhabitants of that part of the town agreed that in their waking hours the streets had been perfectly still. Nor were there any traces visible of a struggle having taken place. Lieschen might have been murdered elsewhere, and her corpse quietly deposited where it was found, as far as any evidence went.

Wild and vague were the conjectures. All were baffled in the attempt to give them a definite direction. The crime was apparently prompted by revenge—certainly not by lust, or desire of money. But she was not known to have a single rival or enemy. She was not known to stand in any one's way. In this utter blank as to the assignable motive, I, perhaps alone among the furious crowd, had a distinct suspicion of the assassin. No sooner had the news reached me, than with the specification of the theatre of the crime, there at once flashed upon me the intellectual vision of the criminal: the stranger, with the dark beard and startled eyes, stood confessed before me! I held my breath for a few moments, and then there came a tide of objections rushing over my mind, revealing the inadequacy of the grounds on which rested my suspicions. What were those grounds? I had seen a man in a particular spot, not an unfrequented spot, on the evening of the night when a crime had been committed there; that man had seemed to recognise me, and wished to avoid being recognised. Obviously these grounds were too slender to bear any weight of construction such as I had based on them. Mere presence on the spot could no more inculcate him than it could inculcate me; if I had met him there, equally had he

met me there. Nor even if my suspicion were correct that he knew me, and refused to recognise me, could that be any argument tending to criminate him in an affair wholly disconnected with me. Besides, he was walking peaceably, openly, and he looked like a gentleman. All these objections pressed themselves upon me, and kept me silent. But in spite of their force, I could not prevent the suspicion from continually arising. Ashamed to mention it, because it must have sounded too absurd, I could not prevent my constructive imagination indulging in its vagaries; and with this secret conviction I resolved to await events, and in case suspicion from other quarters should ever designate the probable assassin, I might then come forward with my bit of corroborative evidence, should the suspected assassin be the stranger of the archway.

By twelve o'clock a new direction was given to rumour. Hitherto the stories, when carefully sifted of all the exaggerations of flying conjecture, had settled themselves into something like this: The Leheldts had retired to rest at a quarter before ten, as was their custom. They had seen Lieschen go into her bedroom for the night, and had themselves gone to sleep with unclouded minds. From this peaceful security they were startled early in the morning by the appalling news of the calamity which had fallen on them. Incredulous at first, as well they might be, and incapable of believing in a ruin so unexpected and so overwhelming, they imagined some mistake, asserting that Lieschen was in her own room. Into that room they rushed, and there the undisturbed bed, and the open window, but a few feet from the garden, silently and pathetically disclosed the fatal

truth. The bereaved parents turned a revealing look upon each other's whitened faces, and then slowly retired from the room, followed in affecting silence by the others. Back into their own room they went. The father knelt beside the bed, and, sobbing, prayed. The mother sat staring with a stupefied stare, her lips faintly moving. In a short while the flood of grief, awakened to a thorough consciousness, burst from their labouring hearts. When the first paroxysms were over they questioned others, and gave incoherent replies to the questions addressed to them. From all which it resulted that Lieschen's absence, though obviously voluntary, was wholly inexplicable to them; and no clue whatever could be given as to the motives of the crime. When these details became known, conjecture naturally interpreted Lieschen's absence at night as an assignation. But with whom? She was not known to have a lover. Her father, on being questioned, passionately affirmed that she had none; she loved no one but her parents, poor child! Her mother, on being questioned, told the same story—adding, however, that about seventeen months before, she had fancied that Lieschen was a little disposed to favour Franz Kerkel, their shopman; but on being spoken to on the subject with some seriousness, and warned of the distance between them, she had laughed heartily at the idea, and since then had treated Franz with so much indifference, that only a week ago she had drawn from her mother a reproof on the subject.

"I told her Franz was a good lad, though not good enough for her; and that she ought to treat him kindly. But she said my lecture had given her an alarm, lest Franz should have got the same maggot into his head."

This was the story now passing through the curious crowds in every street. After hearing it I had turned into a tobacconist's in the Adlergasse, to restock my cigar-case, and found there, as everywhere, a group discussing the one topic of the hour. Herr Fischer, the tobacconist, with a long porcelain pipe pendent from his screwed-up lips, was solemnly listening to the particulars volubly communicated by a stout Bavarian priest; while behind the counter, in a corner, swiftly knitting, sat his wife, her black bead-like eyes also fixed on the orator. Of course I was dragged into the conversation. Instead of attending to commercial interests, they looked upon me as the possible bearer of fresh news. Nor was it without a secret satisfaction that I found I could gratify them in that respect. They had not heard of Franz Kerkel in the matter. No sooner had I told what I had heard, than the knitting-needles of the vivacious little woman were at once suspended.

"Ach Je!" she exclaimed, "I see it all. He's the wretch!"

"Who?" we all simultaneously inquired.

"Who? Why, Kerkel, of course. If she changed, and treated him with indifference, it was because she loved him; and he has murdered the poor thing."

"How you run on, wife!" remonstrated Fischer; while the priest shook a dubious head.

"I tell you it is so. I'm positive."

"If she loved him."

"She did, I tell you. Trust a woman for seeing through such things."

"Well, say she did," continued Fischer, "and I won't deny that it may be so; but then that makes against the idea of his having done her any harm."

"Don't tell me," retorted the convinced woman. "She loved him. She went out to meet him in secret, and he murdered her—the villain did. I'm as sure of it as if these eyes had seen him do it."

The husband winked at us, as much as to say, "You hear these women!" and the priest and I endeavoured to reason her out of her illogical position. But she was immovable. Kerkel had murdered her; she knew it; she couldn't tell why, but she knew it. Perhaps he was jealous; who knows? At any rate he ought to be arrested.

And by twelve o'clock, as I said, a new rumour ran through the crowd, which seemed to confirm the little woman in her rash logic. Kerkel had been arrested, and a waistcoat stained with blood had been found in his room! By half-past twelve the rumour ran that he had confessed the crime. This, however, proved on inquiry to be the hasty anticipation of public indignation. He had been arrested; the waistcoat had been found; so much was authentic; and the suspicions gathered ominously over him.

When first Frau Fischer had started the suggestion it flew like wildfire. Then people suddenly noticed, as very surprising, that Kerkel had not that day made his appearance at the shop. His absence had not been noticed in the tumult of grief and inquiry; but it became suddenly invested with a dreadful significance, now that it was rumoured that he had been Lieschen's lover. Of all men he would be the most affected by the tragic news; of all men he would have been the first to tender sympathy and aid to the afflicted parents, and the most clamorous in the search for the undiscovered

culprit. Yet, while all Nuremberg was crowding round the house of sorrow, which was also his house of business, he alone remained away. This naturally pointed suspicion at him. When the messengers had gone to seek him, his mother refused them admission, declaring in incoherent phrases, betraying great agitation, that her son was gone distracted with grief, and could see no one. On this it was determined to order his arrest. The police went, the house was searched, and the waistcoat found.

The testimony of the girl who lived as servant in Kerkel's house was also criminatory. She deposed that on the night in question she awoke about half-past eleven with a violent toothache; she was certain as to the hour, because she heard the clock afterwards strike twelve. She felt some alarm at hearing voices in the rooms at an hour when her mistress and young master must long ago have gone to bed; but as the voices were seemingly in quiet conversation, her alarm subsided, and she concluded that instead of having gone to bed her mistress was still up. In her pain she heard the door gently open, and then she heard footsteps in the garden. This surprised her very much. She couldn't think what the young master could want going out at that hour. She became terrified without knowing exactly at what. Fear quite drove away her toothache, which had not since returned. After lying there quaking for some time, again she heard footsteps in the garden; the door opened and closed gently; voices were heard; and she at last distinctly heard her mistress say, "Be a man, Franz. Good night—sleep well;" upon which Franz replied in a tone of great agony, "There's no chance of sleep for me." Then all was silent. Next

morning her mistress seemed "very queer." Her young master went out very early, but soon came back again; and there were dreadful scenes going on in his room, as she heard, but she didn't know what it was all about. She heard of the murder from a neighbour, but never thought of its having any particular interest for Mr

Franz, though, of course, he would be very sorry for the *Lehfeldts*.

The facts testified to by the servant, especially the going out at that late hour, and the "dreadful scenes" of the morning, seemed to bear but one interpretation. Moreover, she identified the waistcoat as the one worn by Franz on the day preceding the fatal night.

CHAPTER III.—THE ACCUSED.

Now at last the pent-up wrath found a vent. From the distracting condition of wandering uncertain suspicion, it had been recalled into the glad security of individual hate. Although up to this time Kerkel had borne an exemplary reputation, it was now remembered that he had always been of a morose and violent temper, a hypocrite in religion, a selfish sensualist. Several sagacious critics had long "seen through him;" others had "never liked him;" others had wondered how it was he kept his place so long in *Lehfeldt's* shop. Poor fellow! his life and actions, like those of every one else when illuminated by a light thrown back upon them, seemed so conspicuously despicable, although when illuminated in their own light they had seemed innocent enough. His mother's frantic protestations of her son's innocence—her assertions that Franz loved *Lieschen* more than his own soul—only served to envelop her in the silent accusation of being an accomplice, or at least of being an accessory after the fact.

I cannot say why it was, but I did not share the universal belief. The logic seemed to me forced; the evidence trivial. On first hearing of Kerkel's arrest, I eagerly questioned my informant respecting his personal appearance; and

on hearing that he was fair, with blue eyes and flaxen hair, my conviction of his innocence was fixed. Looking back on these days, I am often amused at this characteristic of my constructive imagination. While rejecting the disjointed logic of the mob, which interpreted his guilt, I was myself deluded by a logic infinitely less rational. Had Kerkel been dark, with dark eyes and beard, I should probably have sworn to his guilt, simply because the idea of that stranger had firmly fixed itself in my mind.

All that afternoon, and all the next day, the busy hum of voices was raised by the one topic of commanding interest. Kerkel had been examined. He at once admitted that a secret betrothal had for some time existed between him and *Lieschen*. They had been led to take this improper step by fears of her parents, who, had the attachment been discovered, would, it was thought, have separated them for ever. Herr *Lehfeldt's* sternness, no less than his superior position, seemed an invincible obstacle; and the good mother, although doting upon her only daughter, was led by the very intensity of her affection to form ambitious hopes of her daughter's future. It was barely possible that some turn in events might one day yield an opening for their consent; but

meanwhile prudence dictated secrecy, in order to avert the most pressing danger, that of separation. And so the pretty Lieschen, with feminine instinct of ruse, had affected to treat her lover with indifference; and to compensate him and herself for this restraint, she had been in the habit of escaping from home once or twice a-week, and spending a delicious hour or two at night in the company of her lover and his mother. Kerkel and his mother lived in a cottage a little way outside the town. Lehfeldt's shop stood not many yards from the archway. Now, as in Nuremberg no one was abroad after ten o'clock, except a few loungers at the *cafés* and beer-houses, and these were only to be met inside the town, not outside it, Lieschen ran extremely little risk of being observed in her rapid transit from her father's to her lover's house. Nor, indeed, had she ever met any one in the course of these visits.

On the fatal night Lieschen was expected at the cottage. Mother and son waited at first hopefully, then anxiously, at last with some vague uneasiness at her non-appearance. It was now a quarter past eleven—nearly an hour later than her usual time. They occasionally went to the door to look for her; then they walked a few yards down the road, as if to catch an earlier glimpse of her advancing steps. But in vain. The half-hour struck. They came back into the cottage, discussing the various probabilities of delay. Three-quarters struck. Perhaps she had been detected; perhaps she was ill; perhaps—but this was his mother's suggestion, and took little hold of him—there had been visitors who had stayed later than usual, and Lieschen, finding the night so far advanced, had postponed her visit to the morrow. Franz, who interpreted

Lieschen's feelings by his own, was assured that no postponement of a voluntary kind was credible of her. Twelve o'clock struck. Again Franz went out into the road, and walked nearly up to the archway; he returned with heavy sadness and foreboding at his heart, reluctantly admitting that now all hope of seeing her that night was over. That night? Poor sorrowing heart, the night was to be eternal! The anguish of the desolate "never more" was awaiting him.

There is something intensely pathetic in being thus, as it were, spectators of a tragic drama which is being acted on two separate stages at once—the dreadful link of connection, which is unseen to the separate actors, being only too vividly seen by the spectators. It was with some such interest that I, who believed in Kerkel's innocence, heard this story; and in imagination followed its unfolding stage. He went to bed, not, as may be expected, to sleep; tossing restlessly in feverish agitation, conjuring up many imaginary terrors—but all of them trifles compared with the dread reality which he was so soon to face. He pictured her weeping—and she was lying dead on the cold pavement of the dark archway. He saw her in agitated eloquence pleading with offended parents—and she was removed for ever from all agitations, with the peace of death upon her young face.

At an early hour he started, that he might put an end to his suspense. He had not yet reached the archway before the shattering news burst upon him. From that moment he remembered nothing. But his mother described his ghastly agitation, as, throwing himself upon her neck, he told her, through dreadful sobs, the calamity which had fallen. She did her best to

comfort him; but he grew wilder and wilder, and rolled upon the ground in the agony of an immeasurable despair. She trembled for his reason and his life. And when the messengers came to seek him, she spoke but the simple truth in saying that he was like one distracted. Yet no sooner had a glimpse of light dawned on him that some vague suspicion rested on him in reference to the murder, than he started up, flung away his agitation, and, with a calmness which was awful, answered every question, and seemed nerved for every trial. From that moment not a sob escaped him until, in the narrative of the night's events, he came to that part which told of the sudden disclosure of his bereavement. And the simple, straightforward manner in which he told this tale, with a face entirely bloodless, and eyes that seemed to have withdrawn all their light inwards, made a great impression on the auditors, which was heightened into sympathy when the final sob, breaking through the forced calmness, told of the agony which was eating its fiery way through the heart.

The story was not only plausible in itself, but accurately tallied with what before had seemed like the criminating evidence of the maid; tallied, moreover, precisely as to time, which would hardly have been the case had the story been an invention. As to the waistcoat which had figured so conspicuously in all the rumours, it appeared that suspicion had monstrously exaggerated the facts. Instead of a waistcoat plashed with blood—as popular imagination pictured it—it was a grey waistcoat, with one spot and a slight smear of blood, which admitted of a very simple explanation. Three days before, Franz had cut his left hand in

cutting some bread; and to this the maid testified, because she was present when the accident occurred. He had not noticed that his waistcoat was marked by it until the next day, and had forgotten to wash out the stains.

People outside shook sceptical heads at this story of the cut hand. The bloody waistcoat was not to be disposed of in that easy way. It had fixed itself too strongly in their imagination. Indeed, my belief is that even could they have seen the waistcoat, its insignificant marks would have appeared murderous patches to their eyes. I had seen it, and my report was listened to with ill-concealed disbelief, when not with open protestation. And when Kerkel was discharged as free from all suspicion, there was a low growl of disappointed wrath heard from numerous groups.

This may sympathetically be understood by whomsoever remembers the painful uneasiness of the mind under a great stress of excitement with no definite issue. The lust for a vengeance, demanded by the aroused sensibilities of compassion, makes men credulous in their impatience; they easily believe any one is guilty, because they feel an imperious need for fastening the guilt upon some definite head. Few verdicts of "Not Guilty" are well received, unless another victim is at hand upon whom the verdict of guilty is likely to fall. It was demonstrable to all judicial minds that Kerkel was wholly, pathetically innocent. In a few days this gradually became clear to the majority, but at first it was resisted as an attempt to balk justice; and to the last there were some obstinate doubters, who shook their heads mysteriously, and said, with a certain incisiveness, "Somebody must have done it; I should very much like to know who."

Suspicion once more was drifting aimlessly. None had pointed in any new direction. No mention of any one whom I could identify with the stranger had yet been made; but, although silent on the subject, I kept firm in my conviction, and I sometimes laughed at the pertinacity with which I scrutinised the face of every man I met, if he happened to have a black beard; and as black beards are excessively common, my curiosity, though never gratified, was never allowed repose.

Meanwhile Lieschen's funeral had been emphatically a public mourning. Nay, so great was the emotion, that it almost deadened the interest, which otherwise would have been so powerful, in the news now daily reaching us from Paris. Blood had flowed upon her streets—in consequence of that pistol-shot which, either by accident or criminal intent, had converted the demonstration before the hotel of the Minister of Foreign Affairs into an insurrection. Paris had risen; barricades were erected. The troops were under arms. This was agitating news.

Such is the solidarity of all European nations, and so quick are all to vibrate in unison with the vibrations of each, that events like those transacted in Paris necessarily stirred every city, no matter how remote, nor politically how secure. And it says much for the intense interest excited by the Lehfelddt tragedy that Nuremberg was capable of sustaining that interest even amid the tremendous pressure of the February Revolution. It is true that Nuremberg is at all times somewhat sequestered from the great movements of the day, following slowly in the rear of great waves; it is true, moreover, that some politicians showed remarkable eagerness in canvassing the charac-

ters and hopes of Louis Philippe and Guizot; but although such events would at another period have formed the universal interest, the impenetrable mystery hanging over Lieschen's death threw the Revolution into the background of their thoughts. If when a storm is raging over the dreary moorland, a human cry of suffering is heard at the door, at once the thunders and the tumult sink into insignificance, and are not even heard by the ear which is pierced with the feeble human voice: the grandeurs of storm and tempest, the uproar of surging seas, the clamorous wail of sea-birds amid the volleying artillery of heaven, in vain assail the ear that has once caught even the distant cry of a human agony, or serve only as scenical accompaniments to the tragedy which is foreshadowed by that cry. And so it was amid the uproar of 1848. A kingdom was in convulsions; but here, at our door, a young girl had been murdered, and two hearths made desolate.

Rumours continued to fly about. The assassin was always about to be discovered; but he remained shrouded in impenetrable darkness. A remark made by Bourgonef struck me much. Our host, Zum Bayerischen Hof, one day announced with great satisfaction that he had himself heard from the syndic that the police were on the traces of the assassin.

"I am sorry to hear it," said Bourgonef.

The guests paused from eating, and looked at him with astonishment.

"It is a proof," he added, "that even the police now give it up as hopeless. I always notice that whenever the police are said to be on the traces the malefactor is never tracked. When they are on his traces they wisely say nothing

about it; they allow it to be believed that they are baffled, in order to lull their victim into a dangerous security. When they know themselves to be baffled,

there is no danger in quieting the public mind, and saving their own credit, by announcing that they are about to be successful."

CHAPTER IV.—A DISCOVERY.

Bourgonef's remark had been but too sagacious. The police were hopelessly baffled. In all such cases possible success depends upon the initial suggestion either of a motive which leads to a suspicion of the person, or of some person which leads to a suspicion of the motive. Once set suspicion on the right track, and evidence is suddenly alight in all quarters. But, unhappily, in the present case there was no assignable motive, no shadow darkening any person.

An episode now came to our knowledge, in which Bourgonef manifested an unusual depth of interest. I was led to notice this interest, because it had seemed to me that in the crime itself, and the discussions which arose out of it, he shared but little of the universal excitement. I do not mean that he was indifferent—by no means; but the horror of the crime did not seem to fascinate his imagination as it fascinated ours. He could talk quite as readily of other things, and far more readily of the French affairs. But on the contrary, in this new episode he showed peculiar interest. It appeared that Lehfeldt, moved, perhaps, partly by a sense of the injustice which had been done to Kerkel in even suspecting him of the crime, and in submitting him to an examination more poignantly affecting to him under such circumstances, than a public trial would have been under others; and moved partly by the sense that Lieschen's love had practi-

cally drawn Kerkel within the family—for her choice of him as a husband had made him morally, if not legally, a son-in-law; and moved partly by the sense of loneliness which had now settled on their childless home,—Lehfeldt had in the most pathetic and considerate terms begged Kerkel to take the place of his adopted son, and become joint partner with him in the business. This, however, Kerkel had gently yet firmly declined. He averred that he felt no injury, though great pain had been inflicted on him by the examination. He himself in such a case would not have shrunk from demanding that his own brother should be tried, under suspicions of similar urgency. It was simple justice that all who were suspected should be examined; justice also to them that they might for ever clear themselves of doubtful appearances. But for the rest, while he felt his old affectionate respect for his master, he could recognise no claim to be removed from his present position. Had she lived, said the heart-broken youth, he would gladly have consented to accept any fortune which her love might bestow, because he felt that his own love, and the devotion of a life, might repay it. But there was nothing now that he could give in exchange. For his services he was amply paid; his feelings towards Lieschen's parents must continue what they had ever been. In vain Lehfeldt pleaded, in vain many friends argued.

Franz remained respectfully firm in his refusal.

This, as I said, interested Bourgonef immensely. He seemed to enter completely into the minds of the sorrowing pleading parents, and the sorrowing denying lover. He appreciated and expounded their motives with a subtlety and delicacy of perception which surprised and delighted me. It showed the refinement of his moral nature. But, at the same time, it rendered his minor degree of interest in the other episodes of the story, those which had a more direct and overpowering appeal to the heart, a greater paradox.

Human nature is troubled in the presence of all mystery which has not by long familiarity lost its power of soliciting attention; and for my own part, I have always been uneasy in the presence of moral problems. Puzzled by the contradictions which I noticed in Bourgonef, I tried to discover whether he had any general repugnance to stories of crimes, or any special repugnance to murders, or, finally, any strange repugnance to this particular case now everywhere discussed. And it is not a little remarkable, that during three separate interviews, in the course of which I severally, and as I thought artfully, introduced these topics, making them seem to arise naturally out of the suggestion of our talk, I totally failed to arrive at any distinct conclusion. I was afraid to put the direct question: Do you not share the common feeling of interest in criminal stories? This question would doubtless have elicited a categorical reply; but somehow, the consciousness of an *arrière-pensée* made me shrink from putting such a question.

Reflecting on this indifference on a special point, and on the numerous manifestations I had

noticed of his sensibility, I came at last to the conclusion that he must be a man of tender heart, whose delicate sensibilities easily shrank from the horrible under every form; and no more permitted him to dwell unnecessarily upon painful facts, than they permit imaginative minds to dwell on the details of an operation.

I had not long settled this in my mind before an accident suddenly threw a lurid light upon many details noticed previously, and painfully revived that inexplicable repulsion with which I had at first regarded him. A new suspicion filled my mind, or rather, let me say, a distinct shape was impressed upon many fluctuating suspicions. It scarcely admitted of argument, and at times seemed preposterous, nevertheless it persisted. The mind which in broad daylight assents to all that can be alleged against the absurdities of the belief in apparitions, will often acknowledge the dim terrors of darkness and loneliness—terrors at possibilities of supernatural visitations. In like manner, in the clear daylight of reason I could see the absurdity of my suspicion, but the vague stirrings of feeling remained unsilenced. I was haunted by the dim horrors of a possibility.

Thus it arose. We were both going to Munich, and Bourgonef had shortened his contemplated stay at Nuremberg that he might have the pleasure of accompanying me; adding also that he, too, should be glad to reach Munich, not only for its art, but for its greater command of papers and intelligence respecting what was then going on in France. On the night preceding the morning of our departure, I was seated in his room, smoking and discussing as usual, while Ivan, his ser-

vant, packed up his things in two large portmanteaus.

Ivan was a serf who spoke no word of any language but his own. Although of a brutal, almost idiotic type, he was loudly eulogised by his master as the model of fidelity and usefulness. Bourgonef treated him with gentleness, though with a certain imperiousness; much as one might treat a savage mastiff which it was necessary to dominate without exasperating. He more than once spoke of Ivan as a living satire on physiognomists and phrenologists; and as I am a phrenologist, I listened with some incredulity.

"Look at him," he would say. "Observe the low retreating brow, the flat face, the surly mouth, the broad base of the head, and the huge bull-like neck. Would not any one say Ivan was as destructive as a panther, as tenacious as a bull-dog, as brutal as a bull? Yet he is the gentlest of sluggish creatures, and as tender-hearted as a girl! That thick-set muscular frame shrouds a hare's heart. He is so faithful and so attached, that I believe for me he would risk his life; but on no inducement could you get him to place himself in danger on his own account. Part of his love for me is gratitude for having rescued him from the conscription: the dangers incident to a military life had no charm for him!"

Now, although Bourgonef, who was not a phrenologist, might be convinced of the absence of ferocious instincts in Ivan, to me, as a phrenologist, the statement was eminently incredible. All the appearances of his manner were such as to confirm his master's opinion. He was quiet, even tender in his attentions. But the tyrannous influence of ideas and physical impressions cannot be set aside; and no evidence would permanently

have kept down my distrust of this man. When women shriek at the sight of a gun, it is in vain that you solemnly assure them the gun is not loaded. "I don't know," they reply,—*"at any rate, I don't like it."* I was much in this attitude with regard to Ivan. He might be harmless. I didn't know that; what I did know was—that I didn't like his looks.

On this night he was moving noiselessly about the room employed in packing. Bourgonef's talk rambled over the old themes; and I thought I had never before met with one of my own age whose society was so perfectly delightful. He was not so conspicuously my superior on all points that I felt the restraints inevitably imposed by superiority; yet he was in many respects sufficiently above me in knowledge and power to make me eager to have his assent to my views where we differed, and to have him enlighten me where I knew myself to be weak.

In the very moment of my most cordial admiration came a shock. Ivan, on passing from one part of the room to the other, caught his foot in the strap of the portmanteau and fell. The small wooden box, something of a glove-box, which he held in his hand at the time, fell on the floor, and falling over, discharged its contents close to Bourgonef's feet. The objects which caught my eyes were several pairs of gloves, a rouge-pot and hare's-foot, and a black beard!

By what caprice of imagination was it that the sight of this false beard lying at Bourgonef's feet thrilled me with horror? In one lightning-flash I beheld the archway—the stranger with the startled eyes—this stranger no longer unknown to me, but too fatally recognised as Bourgonef—and at his feet the murdered girl!

Moved by what subtle springs of suggestion I know not, but there before me stood that dreadful vision, seen in a lurid light, but seen as clearly as if the actual presence of the objects were obtruding itself upon my eyes. In the inexpressible horror of this vision my heart seemed clutched with an icy hand.

Fortunately Bourgonef's attention was called away from me. He spoke angrily some sharp sentence, which of course was in Russian, and therefore unintelligible to me. He then stooped, and picking up the rouge-pot, held it towards me with his melancholy smile. He was very red in the face; but that may have been either anger, or the effect of sudden stooping. "I see you are surprised at these masquerading follies," he said in a tone which, though low, was perfectly calm. "You must not suppose that I beautify my sallow cheeks on ordinary occasions."

He then quietly handed the pot to Ivan, who replaced it with the gloves and the beard in the box; and after making an inquiry which sounded like a growl, to which Bourgonef answered negatively, he continued his packing.

Bourgonef resumed his cigar and his argument as if nothing had happened.

The vision had disappeared, but

a confused mass of moving figures took its place. My heart throbbed so violently that it seemed as if its tumult must be heard by others. Yet my face must have been tolerably calm, since Bourgonef made no comment on it.

I answered his remarks in vague fragments, for, in truth, my thoughts were flying from conjecture to conjecture. I remembered that the stranger had a florid complexion; was this rouge? It is true that I fancied that the stranger carried a walking-stick in his right hand; if so, this was enough to crush all suspicions of his identity with Bourgonef; but then I was rather hazy on this point, and probably did not observe a walking-stick.

After a while my inattention struck him, and looking at me with some concern, he inquired if there were anything the matter. I pleaded a colic, which I attributed to the imprudence of having indulged in *sauerkraut* at dinner. He advised me to take a little brandy; but, affecting a fresh access of pain, I bade him good-night. He hoped I should be all right on the morrow—if not, he added, we can postpone our journey till the day after.

Once in my own room I bolted the door, and sat down on the edge of the bed in a tumult of excitement.

LORD WOLSELEY'S "MEN."

"PLEASE, sir, the other boy did it."

The above was a *bonâ fide* remark actually made in the orderly-room of a regiment the other day, with the object of excusing himself from some childish offence, by one of the *men* to whom the Adjutant-General alluded lately in the following terms: "After great opportunities of going amongst the rank and file, I declare with confidence that the men who have enlisted in recent years in the army are as fine, if *not finer*" (the emphasis is our own), "than those who have enlisted at any time since I first entered the service," &c.

Now, although a considerable difference is noticeable between the spirit and bearing of the shorter speech with which we have headed these remarks, and the longer and more elaborate one which follows, yet the balance of evidence seems so greatly in favour of the truth of what proceeded out of the innocent mouth of the military babe or suckling whom we quote, that, although it is not our intention to inflict upon our readers a long sermon based upon either, it may not be unprofitable to consider, among other things, how the facts deducible from the former touch just now upon the condition of our army. It is probable, too, that after the first rush of business of the present session has been disposed of, a good many questions will be asked by inquiring members with a view to elucidate the advantages—or otherwise—of certain details regarding our new military system; and as the officials to whom such queries are addressed are in general singularly

ill-informed, or else purposely reticent, upon these matters of public interest, it may be instructive to consider shortly how some of the most important of the recent changes are affecting our military organisation.

Let us glance first at how some of the new regulations concerning recruiting affect our infantry, and whether they are likely to tend practically, as theoretically they were supposed to do, to promote a "territorial" feeling combined with that *esprit de corps* which may be rightly said to have been, up to a recent date, the backbone of our army and the main source of our achievements in years gone by. Test cases in such an inquiry are not without their value; and as Highlanders boast, and with good reason, of being still influenced by the old-fashioned ties of kindred and clannishness, a few remarks as to how the new system is affecting the Celtic corps, will help to throw some light upon the subject.

With the apparent view of preserving the nationality of these regiments, it is thought inexpedient to enlist Englishmen for them, as also, from presumably similar reasons, it is considered inadmissible to enlist Irishmen who present themselves, out of Scotland, with a view to being posted to Highland battalions. Considering the turbulent state of the sister isle, any regiment which can legally decline the honour of these latter additions to its ranks may be esteemed fortunate, and will appreciate the theoretical wisdom of such a decree.

But how does this act? Practical experience supplies a ready answer, and proves that it is obli-

gatory upon officers in Scotland to accept of recruits of any nationality (within the British Isles), provided only that their request is preferred upon Scottish soil.

A recruit—we will say Michael O'Flaherty by name—born and brought up in the wilds of Tipperary, and thoroughly imbued with patriotic (*Anglicè*, anti-British) instincts, presents himself at Newcastle, asks to be enlisted for the 150th Regiment (the Royal Highland M'Haggis Light Infantry), but is told, "No, you are an Irishman—we cannot enlist you for that distinguished Highland corps; there are your own territorial regiments, to whose districts in Ireland you can be posted." Nothing daunted, the would-be Highlander scrapes together a few shillings, and by begging and stealing *en route*, gains the, to him, promised Land of Cakes. He presents himself again to the first recruiting officer he comes across a few miles north of the Tweed, again states what are his aspirations, is promptly enlisted, and sent to the district headquarters of the corps he elects to adorn. Then no further action is possible but to accept of his services, remove from him the "breeks," which it is only "ill to tak' aff a Hielander," and for the next few years, if he does not desert or persuade his relations to purchase his discharge, he serves in the corps of his choice, and if thoroughly patriotic, does his best during that time to inoculate his fellow-soldiers with his own peculiar ideas of *esprit de corps*.

The impossibility, however, of supplying suitable recruits for Highland regiments has now become apparent. In former years, indeed, it was difficult enough; and the fact of those regiments being now considerably increased in number, has not rendered the task more

easy: and while it is hard to conceive how the military advisers of the officials who brought about the change were so ignorant on this subject as to recommend it in good faith to the reformers of the army, it is equally perplexing to have to assign any plea other than ignorance to account for such an ill-advised and gratuitous increase of our Highland Brigade—an increase which gave no satisfaction to those whose *status quo* was more or less maintained. The change, too, was decidedly unpopular with those who are thus forcibly condemned to adopt a costume and assume a nationality, to neither of which transformations had they ever remotely aspired.

Let us now consider the question of the increasing difficulties in other ways, which, in spite of this ever-recurring trump-card of "33,000 men enlisted last year," are experienced daily, by those who know most about the matter, in the way of keeping up an efficient supply of able-bodied recruits. The classes from which almost the only good soldiers are drawn are far too wide awake not to recognise the fact that there is no dependence to be placed on the promises and allurements held out to them by the authorities. The conditions of service have been trifled with so often, that, although the possibility of making a home of the army is again, temporarily, within their reach, they know quite well that by a stroke of the pen all these regulations may be altered, and that after a few years in the ranks, they may be relegated to their former position, having forgotten the trade to which they were brought up, and having become, by reason of their time lost in soldiering, unfit to cope with their civilian fellow-labourers in the vineyard. They now find themselves without em-

ployment, a burden alike to themselves and to their friends, and fit only to swell the roll of loafers; and they must, as matters now stand, eventually prove a blot in the annals of our political economy. They are hampered, too, by a further tie—for, being enrolled in the Reserve, they are no longer the free agents that they were, and a far-seeing employer of labour will think twice before he engages, in permanent work, men who are liable to be called away at a moment's notice to serve on some one of the many national emergencies which may be brought about at any moment through the meddling policy of a weak and irresolute Government.

One of the morals to be deduced from these facts is, that both in English and Scotch districts it is the exception and not the rule to enlist a man—we use the term advisedly; and though the number of ill-fed boys who, in immediate want of a meal, present themselves as food for powder, has been cited lately, and will be so again, as a proof of the success of the present system of recruiting, it is hardly satisfactory for the tax-payer to consider that this "exceeding beggarly rabble" is the first line of defence of his native country, and that, if a moderately-sized field-force has to be sent abroad, the Reserve, or proper second line, has, as no one knows better than our latest general, to be largely drawn upon to augment the former.

Without having before us such a large supply of figures as was so liberally misquoted on a recent public occasion, our remarks are nevertheless based upon statistics on which we place greater reliance than on any which, after our recent experience of official utterances, are likely to emanate from a simi-

lar source. As regards the average height of the army, its standard has never, except in times of great emergency, such as the period immediately following the Crimean war, reached so low a point as at present—viz., 5 ft. 4 in., with the option of a still lower minimum of 5 ft. 3 in., provided there appear, in the doctor's opinion, any chance of the infant prodigy increasing in any way his stature; and from 5 ft. 3 in. to 5 ft. 6 in. is the commonest height of the present run of recruits. Whence, then, comes this race of giants which have been held up as a terror to Europe, and a proof of our superiority to European armies? In that same speech, too—the general tenor and sincerity of which remind us a good deal of the one in which the same authority stated he had never, during the late campaign, seen a drunken soldier in Egypt—we are only told of the 33,000 who enlisted last year, but no mention is made of the thousands out of those whose names—whether by desertion or discharge by purchase—should, in all fairness, have been struck off the roll.

Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat: if the British public are sufficiently gullible to allow dust to be thrown in their eyes by men who, by stanch adherence to their party, have raised themselves to the highest rungs of the ladder, and who, if unscrupulous misrepresentations avail, intend to remain there, it needs no great prophetic gift to foresee that our collapse as a military power may, under such a régime, at any time ensue. Nor can any impartially minded Minister fail to see the matter in this light; and it is little to the credit of those who have the ear of, and are paid to advise, the men who hold the reins, if, for motives of further self-aggrandisement, and for the

sake of promoting party interests, they continue to hoodwink the authorities, and, through them, the nation.

It will be very truly remarked, that to find fault is far easier than to suggest a remedy; but in any case, it is the duty of those who are well posted in the present rotten condition of affairs, not to allow such unwarrantable statements as we have lately heard to go abroad unrefuted, more especially when they originate from the high authority in question. In making this charge, we do not dwell so much on actual misstatement of figures, and the suspicious substitution of one year's return for another—though such inaccuracy seems, at the first blush, wholly incomprehensible; but what appears to us as almost more serious are the misleading deductions from the practical experience of the speaker—experience which he knew must carry a certain weight even with military men, and which was certainly bound to convince the general public, when they read with pride in the morning's papers the praises of their army by its chief.

Thanks to the Earl of Galloway's criticism, the public have now learnt the true worth of these rose-coloured statements: and it is to be hoped that Lord Wolseley has also laid to heart the lesson which has been read to him; for he has established one of two indisputable conclusions—either that his statements are so wholly haphazard as to be received only with the greatest caution, or else that, for the advancement and popularising of his own peculiar views, he quoted statistics he knew to be incorrect, trusting to the fatuous ignorance of his audience to escape detection. In either case, grave doubts must arise as to the fitness for such an important post as that which he

now holds of a person who thus gratuitously insults the public common-sense.

Again, as regards the advanced views of the peculiar clique whose representations have brought about the recent serious condition of affairs, we cannot bring ourselves wholly to believe that the collective wisdom, coupled with the wide experience of the despised regimental officer, would not be engaged to build up a better fabric, without the constantly recurring scandal involved in a complete demolition of the preceding structure. It is to the skill and ability of such men that we would fain look for deliverance from our present straits,—men who, serving their country in all singleness of spirit and for a very trifling remuneration, are far more surely to be relied upon to give an honest and practical opinion than are any of the place-hunting demagogues whose professional existence depends in great measure, if not entirely, upon how far the promulgation of their tenets is acceptable to their employers and pleasing to the public, to whose tastes these same employers are bound to pander.

But supposing, now, that we have probed far enough to feel ourselves pretty close to the root of the evil, are we any nearer the remedy? We affirm that we are—in so far, at all events, that we are convinced of the present error of our ways, and of the urgent need of striking out in some other direction, though how far a new departure is possible is another question. It is clear on the face of it, that manipulate, expand, and exaggerate our present influx of recruits as you will, you cannot make out of them both the ingredients of a standing army and a supply for the Reserve, either of

the quality or quantity required. At present we can hardly be said to possess either, and are decidedly of opinion that a real first line of defence is of far more importance than a paper or phantom Reserve.

The contradictory orders which almost every month issue from the War Office as to the decreasing minimum about the size of recruits, and how, by expanding him in one direction, he may be accepted, though too small in some other way, remind one more of the regulations of the parcel-post than the results of the grave deliberations of military Solons.

Of the various minor contrivances, even under existing conditions, to which recourse might be had for the purpose of gathering more lambs into our military folds, it is hardly our province to speak here, though the readiness with which they occur to many who never have the chance of being consulted on the subject, makes it more surprising that they should escape the countenance and favourable notice of the expert. It is, for example, a well-known fact to all who have anything to do with recruiting—though the reverse is steadily maintained and publicly upheld by those who should know better—that, of all the classes who furnish recruits, fewest are obtained from the best of all—viz., the agricultural class. Many reasons, such as high wages, disinclination to travel, &c., are assigned for this; but it is very probable that if our country yeomen saw more of our soldiers, and the sight was made at all attractive, numbers might be induced to turn their attention to military service. For this purpose, when the annual moves of regiments take place, some might be accomplished by route-marching through the country, especially when going from

one station to another, at both or either of which, camp equipment and necessaries are always in store. The additional advantage, too, would be gained, of keeping these requisites in repair and in readiness for active service, and our young soldiers would learn better how to perform these elementary military duties when called upon to do so in the field.

To such publicity, of course, the objection may be raised that the spectacle of an entire regiment marching through the country, and composed of, at the most, 120 to 130 men, though inspiring and awe-inspiring to the average nursery-maid, may not only fail to impress the agricultural population with such feelings, but might even tend to bring into contempt and disrepute the arm of the service which the measure was intended to benefit. Of this, however, we would have to take the chance.

Another device for raising men might be compassed in a different way. One of the chief crimes in the army is desertion; and with a view to discourage this and the more serious offence of fraudulent enlistment, which has lately become so common, the punishments to which delinquents are liable have been rendered more severe by trying them—when discovered—by the highest class of military tribunal. With some men this kind of desertion has assumed almost the form of a disease; and no sooner is a deserter tried, imprisoned, and eventually released, than he at once deserts again; and when for the most trifling consideration he commits the crime of fraudulent enlistment, he is almost inevitably again detected, and receives the reward of his sins in a punishment of, at least, five years' penal servitude. Now, strange to say, the character of these offenders is often, with

the exception of their besetting sin, not only far from incorrigible, but sometimes good; their only failing is an unaccountable restlessness, if it may so be called, which leads them to shift so frequently the scene of their labours, and thereby get into trouble. Place them in a position—other than the interior of a jail—where they will be removed from such temptations, and (with, of course, certain exceptions) no better soldiers could be desired. India at once suggests itself as a promising field for such an experiment; and, instead of being a burden to their country during a lengthened term of imprisonment, they might, after a short but severe period of incarceration, be relegated to battalions in the East, to serve either for the term of their original enlistment, or for such time as the authorities think proper to decide.

Space, however, forbids us to enlarge further upon the many subordinate schemes for obtaining the great object in view. It remains for us, therefore, to allude very shortly to the only two important alternatives which would seem to commend themselves to the common-sense of all, whether military or otherwise—viz., conscription, or an increase of pay. Of the first, even in a modified form, it is presumably useless to treat; but to the second, when coupled with more popular conditions of service, we are inclined to think that the attention of our

legislators must be soon directed. During the last few months every device which the ingenuity of the War Office, prompted by those who have a heavy issue at stake, can devise, has been brought into play—the result being, as we have endeavoured to point out, neither more nor less than a miserable failure. Our recruiting agents may scour the country, the Government may cover acres of paper detailing in glowing terms the immense advantages to be gained by the youth of the country devoting themselves to the profession of arms; but unless their agents go into the labour market offering a fair price for the article they require, the sole result will be, that the strong and able hold back, while the weak and hungry flock to our standard—the only useful purpose they serve being to pad the after-dinner speeches of our Government officials.

If no change is possible, the question then finally arises, whether the millennium, which after four years of Liberal rule should now be approaching, is within a sufficiently "measurable distance" to justify the continuance of our military *status quo*,—or whether we should not select some remedy evolved from the wisdom of a class to which we have casually alluded, but which is not fortunate enough to bear engraved upon the foreheads of its members the distinguishing marks of the Mutual Admiration Society.

TO AN ANGLING FRIEND.

"An excellent angler, and now with God."

—Izaak Walton, 'The Compleat Angler,' chapter iv.

"Remains the lean P.W. on his tomb."

—Tennyson, 'The Brook, an Idyl.'

"His saltem adcumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere."

—Virg., *Æneid*, vi. l. 886.

I.

At last, old Friend! thy limber rod,
Thine airy flies, and tackle slender,
Dost thou,—“an angler now with God,”—
With lifelong memories surrender.

II.

Let cynics chide,—“He lived in dreams :”
And misers,—“His career was aimless :”
“Nay, but,” I answer, “lakes and streams
Were all his care. His sport, how blameless !”

III.

By softly tinkling moorland rill,
In incense-breathing, balmy weather,
How oft didst thou thy pannier fill
“Amang the bonnie blooming heather !”

IV.

How oft, by hazel-screened cascade,
Or heron-haunted sedge and sallow,
Pursue thy busy, silent trade,
On foamy pool, or crystal shallow !

V.

How craftily went forth thy fly;
Thy wrist, to strike, how quick and ready;
The hand obeying still the eye,
At circling “rise” on linn or eddy !

VI.

Or on some lily-tressured lake,
Round isles with purple sunset glowing,
What grand “*Feroces*” didst thou take,
The artful parr-tail deftly towing !

VII.

With gold, and burnished silver, pied,
With jet and rubies richly spotted,
How fair they seemed ! How good when fried !
How “unco guid,” in sooth, when potted !

VIII.

No more the loch, the river, sees
 Thine upright, active figure strolling,
 Waving thy "stretcher" on the breeze,
 Or, "with the minnow," lightly trolling.

IX.

No more doth Hieland hut receive
 Beneath its friendly, reek-stained rafter,
 Thy heavy creel at close of eve,
 Thy quaint conceits, thy winsome laughter.

X.

But now that Death "hath cleeked thy gills,"
 And laid thee in his gruesome wherry,—
 Auld Scotland's brightest lakes and rills
 Exchanged for Charon's murky ferry,—

XI.

Waste ne'er a cast on Acheron;
 Shun Loch Avernus; flee Cocytus;
 Troll not in Styx, nor Phlegethon;—
 (Such "lower pools" would scarce invite us!)

XII.

Let "water-burnings" be reserved
 As baleful doom for poachers erring;—
 Be thou by higher Grace preserved
 From being "roasted like a herring!"¹

XIII.

So may a faithful Rod and Staff
 Attend, where Jordan's waves betide thee;
 And Cherubs haste, with helpful gaff,
 Through that last, chilly ford to guide thee:

XIV.

That, where the Fourfold Rivers' flow
 Of Paradise, in joy unfailing,
 Thou still mayst lure, with artist-throw,
 Great disembodied trout and grayling:—

XV.

And may the final trumpet-call,
 Whose sound all Earth and Sea embraces,
 Permit thy "lines" for aye to fall,
 Old angling Friend! "in pleasant places!"

J. P. M.

¹ "Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'
 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!"

—Burns, "Tam O'Shanter, a Tale."

THE SLAUGHTERS IN THE SOUDAN.

NOTHING short of the general outburst of indignation which has just startled him would have availed to call Mr Gladstone from the paradise in which he habitually dwells. It is said that he never reads a newspaper. Many of his colleagues, no doubt, draw inspiration from such sources, but he is not supposed to be in the habit of inviting, or listening to, suggestions from his colleagues, by whom, it is rumoured, he is more feared than liked. Thus, intelligence as to what the world is thinking about him or his policy reaches him with difficulty. The relations with those around him which he likes best, are those in which he stands on a pedestal and others grovel and adore. But belief in his own merits and his own judgment was already the chief of his besetting sins, and this kind of intercourse, if such it can be called, has only served to exaggerate the failing into complete extravagance. He is his own Pope. What he, in the recesses of that autocratic and presumptuous spirit, conceives, must be right. If facts contradict him, he puts them calmly aside. Such is the mood in which he approaches public affairs. At the same time, as is often the case with imperious spirits, he is not a man of prompt resolution, because he is not a man of steady purposes. He is essentially shifty and evasive. When it is considered that the Minister who has had to deal with the different problems which Egypt affords is distinguished by these peculiarities, much of what has occurred there is already accounted for. The "policy" is all his own. No such wisdom as is born of counsel, and of consideration of the views of others, sways

him, or ripens his statesmanship. "*L'état c'est moi.*"

But the problems which Egypt offered, when we became established there in military occupation, were such as needed a rare combination of wisdom and decision for their successful solution. To provide for the situation was a task which theorists would enter lightly on, though men of action would see in it occasion for all their resolution and all their resources. For there might be said to exist no longer any institutions whatever in the country, civil or military, while, at the same time, what was called its Government was absolutely subject to our Premier's will. The sheet of paper was clean, and he had only to write on it. The plan devised in that shifty brain was eminently characteristic, and eminently that of a man who did not know men. He would rule Egypt, he would frame a constitution for it, he would imbue the corrupt pashas and the ignorant fellaheen alike with the love of representative institutions, and would then—that is to say, in a few months or so—leave them alone to regulate the clockwork wound up and set going by himself. But the choicest part of the choice plan was, that all the while this magical work was being done, we were to pretend that we had nothing to do with it. Egypt, England, and Europe were to admire the drama performed by the puppets, but all were to agree to ignore Mr Codlin hidden by the drapery. Then the deviser, the Demiurgos, casting merely an occasional glance at the admirable device, would be free to devote himself to more congenial pursuits—such, for instance, as exciting

in this country uncertainty and dismay by formidable menaces to its institutions.

The programme conceived in this spirit would have been quite impossible in itself, and some serious miscalculations were shortly manifested. Long after the period assigned for perfection was past, the most perverse failures continued to occur. Egyptian Ministers would not or could not play the game according to the rules. Free institutions appeared to flourish only as cut flowers would flourish when stuck in a bed. The native army, which, when organised, was to be the mainstay of those institutions, and which had been only induced to enlist on the assurance that it would not be called on for service in the Soudan, was suspected of disaffection, and appeared likely, therefore, to become merely a mutinous militia. But all this was not the worst. For it had been decreed in the mind of the deviser of this ingenious scheme for regulating Egyptian affairs, that the Soudan was to be altogether left out of it, and that immense province (since Egypt could not take care of it) was apparently to be left to take care of itself. This prudent plan was, however, all the less likely to meet with even a temporary success when Hicks Pasha advanced from Khartoum, for an incompetent army was then exposing itself to destruction in the attempt to put down a formidable revolt. Nothing but a swift and resolute change of plan, prompt interference in the Soudan business, and peremptory prohibition of Hicks Pasha's advance, could have averted the catastrophe which was presently to call the attention of the world to the disastrous condition of Mr Gladstone's Egyptian puppet-show.

But poor Hicks Pasha advanced

with his troops, whose bones are now whitening on the sands. Thereupon ensued a panic in terrible contrast with the previous comfortable complacency. The Mahdi's revolt, hitherto looked on, if looked on at all, as a dim insurrection in an obscure country, and too remote to excite apprehension, suddenly grew to the dimensions of the genie when the fisherman uncorked the bottle, and became portentous. His forces, to be transported apparently by some such supernatural means as other of the Arabian tales deal with, were forthwith to seize Khartoum, Berber, the First Cataract, even Cairo itself,—and Egypt was to be subjugated by a potentate who had hitherto caused us much less discomfort than Cetewayo. These were, of course, merely the delusions natural to a state of surprise and fright, but the Mahdi, actuated apparently by personal malignity towards Mr Gladstone, now committed, through his lieutenant in the Eastern Soudan, a series of acts of the most discomposing character; disasters happened to Egyptian troops, among whom were Englishmen; garrisons were invested, almost within sight of our ships passing along the Red Sea, and Suakim itself was in danger. Then came a time of distracted counsels and hurried expedients,—not that Mr Gladstone would have been disturbed out of his complacency by such events alone; but the people of this country had begun to take an obtrusive interest in them, and that final cause, the safety of his party, had made itself felt. Gordon, then in Belgium, on his way to the Congo, was suddenly thought of, as if his name, hitherto unknown, had been revealed to the Ministry in a vision. It is only now that the policy intrusted to him is beginning to transpire. It is so simple that the most ingenious would

have been the last to think of it. It consists in conferring on the Mahdi everything which he could possibly desire, or which the most complete successes could have obtained for him, including the privileges of the slave trade. "Only wait till we can get out of the way, and you shall not have the slightest trouble in the matter." Such are the means by which the difficulty of the Soudan is to be got rid of. It will be an instructive lesson in the value of insurrection to a great many intelligent Mohammedans who are looking on in India and other parts of the world.

In the meanwhile something was to be done to relieve the beleaguered garrisons near the coast. In order still to keep up the admirable fiction of Egyptian responsibility, this was to be done with Egyptian troops. To the native constabulary was assigned this novel duty. War is not usually made with policemen, but the regular troops were ineligible, the British forces in Egypt were still under the prevailing conditions of dreamland, and there was really no alternative. The departure of these warriors from Cairo was not reassuring. English residents accustomed to see troops march off for active service with cheers and plaudits, must have felt surprise at seeing the relieving forces set in motion for the field by being surrounded with menacing cavalry, and carried off in chains. The result was even more startling than the destruction of Hicks Pasha's army; because, though the number of the slain was much less, the disaster was much more prominently in view. This, followed by another shocking butchery, had at least this good effect, that a new element now forced itself decisively into the Ministerial plans. The discontent of the nation became turbulent

and menacing, the puppet-show was to be abandoned, and the real manager, after much ingenious evasion, was summoned before a very stormy audience.

And here, the despatch of English troops to the relief of Tokar—which, after all, were too late to save the garrison—suggests another peculiarity of Mr Gladstone's. It is one which probably appears to his Radical supporters a high merit, but which is a novel qualification for the Minister of a great Power,—namely, a strong dislike to the army. It only enters into his calculations as a political force, when he uses it with lamentable effects, as when, after Tel-el-Kebir, he allowed the share of a body of troops which took the principal part in the action to be suppressed, because credit taken from it and bestowed on Irish regiments would flatter the Irish people. He therefore takes no real interest in the army, the people of England take no real interest in it, and it is left in the hands of its immediate officials. The consequences are rather what might be expected than what might be wished. Political motives are paramount in the army. Mr Childers, the late Secretary for War, when his administration was seen to be tending to the question whether we had an army at all, left to his unfortunate successor the task of finding remedies for our military condition, and of describing it in all too-flattering terms, and betook himself to a new post as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which he was presently engaged, with his chief and Lord Granville, in that ruinous negotiation with M. Lesseps, which was just stopped, by the interference of an indignant public, in time to prevent, not mischief, for that remains irretrievable, but the consummation of the sacrifice of

British interests. If a firm of country attorneys had shown a similar indifference to the interests of their client, they would have deserved to be struck off the rolls. It is seldom that a single Minister succeeds in making two such *fiascos* in two different departments.

With such incidents occurring as were startling the world in the Soudan, with others equally grave, imminent, and with Mr Gladstone still making futile attempts at the evasion of responsibility, the vote of censure did not come a moment too soon. The part he played in the debate was characteristic. When he rose on the 12th to meet the charges of the Opposition, he displayed all his wonted dialectic skill. Much of his discourse—nearly two hours long—was misplaced, and not to the purpose; but it was arranged in the usual artistic style, and abounded with clever evasions, traps for cheers, taunts for assailants, and phrases meant to reassure the faltering among his followers. But the effect of his rhetoric was damaged throughout by facts which formed upon it a terrible commentary. Twenty-four hours before, while he was exchanging telegrams with General Gordon, with the desire to cast on him the responsibility of helping or neglecting the despairing garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar, the question was already solved so far as Sinkat was concerned. Outside its walls there was enacted in the African desert a scene pitiable beyond imagination, and intimately connected with the business then before Parliament. We have been accustomed most unjustly to depreciate Egyptian troops, forgetting the conditions under which some constabulary, sent in chains to the field, had displayed a pusillanimous spirit. No braver or more devoted men ever held a post than Tewfik Bey and his un-

fortunate garrison. For months they had been beleaguered by hordes of pitiless foes. Many weeks had passed since the commander had announced—not complainingly, but as a fact necessary to be known—that his men, being only men, could not hold out beyond a certain day, for then their last morsel would be eaten. That day came and passed, and they were better than their word. They still held out. They ate the starving dogs in the streets. But these were sufficient only for a moment to stay the cravings of five hundred men and a thousand women and children, all in the extremity of famine. The dogs were eaten to the last bone. Then—was there ever a more piteous tale?—they took to chewing leaves. And all the time, with eyes growing wider and more haggard as strength failed and hope diminished, they stared from the ramparts towards the sea, where, thirty miles off, they knew was a British admiral with British ships. They knew that Englishmen ruled in Cairo, that the Government they served was in the hands of the Government of England. Perhaps, too, these poor people may have heard that, in days past, England had been prompt to succour and swift to smite when those who depended on her were in deadly peril. And all this time the people of England, filled with indignant impatience, were yearning to help them. At length the last leaf was chewed; for the last time they stared upon the horizon towards Suakim; but neither on the earth, nor in the heaven above, was there any sign of pity. Then, finding nothing but their own bare manhood to rely on, they came to a resolve which deserves a lasting record in the annals of human fortitude. It might have been thought that spirit as well as flesh would have been starved out of them; but

it was not so. They drew together for the last time within the walls, spent some of the last remnants of their strength in destroying their defences and their magazine, and then issued forth towards their foes. Behind them came a forlorn and defenceless crowd of wailing women and crying children—defenceless because their defenders had only come forth to die. It is better not to attempt to imagine the scene which followed. Wolves might have felt pity for the forlorn troop, but their enemies were more ruthless than beasts, for they were fanatical men. Seldom has the sun in heaven looked down on a spectacle so lamentable as that which ensued, and the tidings of which arrived just as the debate began. Upon most of the minds of those present it exercised a powerful effect. During Mr Gladstone's speech, between his hearers and him, the dreadful spectacle outside the doomed and devastated city must have seemed to them to arise. His fine-spun rhetoric must have been confused for them by the fancied wail of women and children. They must have looked at him, and heard him, for those two hours, as if through a bloody mist. The hearts of most in that House were torn by grief and indignation. But there were some hearts (few let us hope) which met the saddening and humiliating tidings with equanimity. They were those of her Majesty's Ministers.

It would be absurd as well as unjust to suppose that Mr Gladstone and his Ministry are proof against the feelings of humanity. But they are under a dominating influence which can, on occasion, quench these feelings. If, in the one scale, the followers of Gladstone place the claims of humanity, the sentiments of honour, the credit of their coun-

try, in the other they cast the interests of their leader and their party; and then humanity, honour, and national repute kick the beam. It is not fancy, but very present reality, that recalls to mind, while contemplating his attitude on this occasion, some grim idol such as we read of as being worshipped by barbarous tribes, whose altar reeks with the blood of hapless and innocent victims. Under an influence no more respectable than that which those benighted adorers submitted to, a great number of our countrymen literally no longer dare to call their souls their own. Men have been asking this long while, how far the delusions of the party could carry them; how long it would be, and to what length they would go, before they would abandon the worship of the gloomy and truculent image which they have set up? And perhaps there will this much good spring out of the horrible calamity in Egypt, that it will bring the spirit of party before us in its ugliest aspect and attended by its most pernicious consequences. When it is apparent that the voice of our common humanity, the natural impulses of Englishmen, are held as nothing compared with the "consistency" of a single man, the predominance of a certain party, a spirit may be evoked, before which the most devoted Liberal will recoil. But the complacency of Mr Gladstone is as yet unshaken. The whole nation was moved to its depths by the catastrophe of Sinkat. It demanded of the Premier, through speakers in the House, "Where are these thy brothers?" and his answer was, "Am I my brothers' keeper?" Surely we may continue the parallel so far as to say that the slaughters of the Soudan have set on his brow a mark which nothing can efface.

TO THE LORDS AND COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—

You have entered upon the labours of a session which must be fraught with much anxiety to yourselves, and which may result in immeasurable consequences to the country and to the Constitution. You have now for four years moulded our legislation and conducted our international and inter-colonial relations—with what amount of success you have only to look around you to discover. Or if such circumspection should be troublesome, the Continental press will readily inform you of the estimation in which you are held throughout Europe. As our English Parliaments in a bygone age supplied a model for, and gave an impetus to, free institutions over the world, so it has been reserved for you to demonstrate the dangers and abuses to which the representative system, when perverted by selfish and unscrupulous hands, may be made liable. Your tenure of your present seats in the Commons is drawing to a close, and it is not improbable that the policy which has been put before you may have the effect of abridging what remains of your legal term. For this, if for no other reason, this session must be critical to you; and the country cordially joins in her Majesty's commendation of "your efforts to the blessing of Almighty God," whose favour cannot be said to have conspicuously followed your past labours.

Your oratorical activity during the recess has met with perhaps more recognition than appreciation. Your addresses have embraced that wide range of subjects that lies between Nothing on the one hand, and universal suffrage

and the establishment of a democratic republic on the other—considerable political entities. But your speeches have in general failed to leave the impression upon us which they doubtless deserved to make, inasmuch as the great majority of you were talking in entire ignorance of the policy which the Government was pursuing, and of the course which it intended to take when it again met Parliament; while the few who were better informed were much more concerned to mystify and mislead their political opponents than to admit the country into their confidence. But your inability to offer us political guidance was compensated for by the utterances of your new masters and ours—the leaders and wire-pullers of the democratic Caucuses—who laid down a course of action for the present session which you have now met to carry into execution. It is a significant mark of progress that the "National Convention" or "Congress" or "Confederation" *quocunque nomine gaudet* "of Liberal Associations," enables us to know by anticipation the substance of the Queen's Speech months before it is spoken.

You heard her Majesty's gracious Speech, and probably noted that its length was only paralleled by its obscurity regarding the topics in which you and the country were at the moment most deeply interested. Doubtless an intense sense of thankfulness pervaded your minds when you were told that a "Treaty of Commerce and Friendship had been signed with Corea," which must open up to your imaginations a field of future advantage as wide as it is

unknown. Our "cordial understanding" with the French Republic with regard to Madagascar, where our flag has been slighted and the property of our subjects plundered and destroyed, has again been "confirmed." Your experience of similar "cordial understandings" with the Republic will leave you in no doubt as to the cost of national honour by which this confirmation has been effected. You were told how the Government fancied that it "had every reason to be satisfied with the tranquillity of Egypt," when the "unforeseen and calamitous necessity," which, like Nemesis, invariably crops up when the Gladstone Government is on the eve of achieving a success, suddenly awoke the Ministry to the fact of which all the rest of the world had been for a considerable time conscious—that it had been living for twelve months in a fools' paradise. But you were not told what it was most essential you should know—viz., what the ultimate intentions of the Ministry with regard to Egypt are; and you were invited to stamp with your approval, in a spirit of blind confidence, a policy which has no more definite guiding principle than that "unforeseen and calamitous necessity" which is the only certain factor in the Government's relations with Egypt. Scarcely had the speech been read when you were afforded a very remarkable instance of the success with which the Government had applied itself in Egypt "to preclude all doubts as to the certain maintenance of its tranquillity." A second Egyptian army, commanded by English officers, and acting under the auspices of her Majesty's Government, had just sustained a defeat only less disastrous than that of Hicks Pasha, in that only half and not the

whole of it was destroyed. Had you, my lords and gentlemen, when this terrible practical commentary upon the euphemistic paragraphs regarding the results of our occupation of Egypt fell upon your ears, any reasonable doubt at whose doors the blame of this disaster properly lay? If you have, Lord Granville's despatch of 4th January, establishing most conclusively the attitude of her Majesty's Government as arbiter of the administration of Egypt, may suffice to solve it. You have cried out loudly against blood-guiltiness in the past, is it not now high time for you to wash your hands in innocency of these Soudan massacres? Do not flatter yourselves that the fact of the defeated and butchered forces being nominally under the orders of another Government can exonerate you. *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.* The ultimate responsibility for all the fortunes and misfortunes of Egypt rests at present upon British Ministers, and is shared by you so long as you maintain them in office. Your culpability is, in truth, greater than theirs, for it is due to your toleration of their previous blunders that they have been able to bring the Egyptian Government to the brink of ruin, and to plunge the greater part of the Khedive's country into a worse condition of anarchy than that which we originally intervened to put an end to.

From this subject, which more than all others has occupied the mind of the country during the past twelve months, the Ministry has sought to draw away your attention by announcing a new Reform Bill, hazily described as, "an enlargement of the occupation franchise throughout the United Kingdom." *Hoc Ithacus velit.* The convention of Caucuses has

ordered it, and the Government humbly obeys. Accustomed as you, gentlemen, have been in times past to represent the views of your constituencies without the intervention of intriguing and domineering middlemen, a Reform Bill, originating in such a source, will scarcely be so agreeable to your feelings as previous measures of the same kind brought forward in deference to the popular will, whether reasonable or not, have been. There are many considerations which face you directly on your approach to this proposal of Reform. In the first place, what reason have you to believe that there exists any sincere wish for the franchise among the rural populations themselves? There has been no sign of enthusiasm upon the subject expressed by the classes that are supposed to be pining for enfranchisement. They have barely responded to the pressing efforts which their friends in the boroughs have put forth to awaken them to a sense of their rights by convening meetings under the auspices of agitators. Those of you who can remember how the popular desire for Parliamentary Reform found expression during the years 1830-32, will be able to appreciate at its due significance the indifference with which the country populations regard the proposed extension. Even the perfervid eloquence of a Beales would hardly rouse half-a-score of genuine rustics to pull down the Park paling on behalf of a Reform Bill. You know that when you were returned to Parliament in 1880, you got no mandate from the country to deal with this question. It was understood that some time or other the assimilation of the country to the borough franchise must take place; but until within the last eight or ten months you were

content to wait until public opinion ripened upon the subject, until the future electors had made up their minds as to the sort of franchise that would best answer their requirements, and until the circumstances of the country in general were favourable to the introduction of a measure of Reform. But is the condition of the country propitious to your dealing with such a question? Had the Ministry proposed to introduce a Reform Bill merely for Great Britain, one of the chief difficulties that now confront you would have been absent. Even if you accept the Ministry's view of the progress of Ireland towards pacification, which the Queen's Speech expressed, are you convinced that Ireland is at present fitted for a Reform Bill, or that a Reform Bill is fitting for the Irish peasantry in their present frame of mind? Is it reasonable that you should be asked to enfranchise with one hand while you are repressing with the other? Yet though the Ministry may ask you to enfranchise the rural Irish, it will not dare to invite you to remove the penal Acts which alone preserve such order as exists in the country. While the Queen's Speech was vaunting the "substantial improvements" which had taken place in the condition of Ireland, the Government was engaged in smuggling with the utmost secrecy a number of traitor-felons and murderers out of the country to prisons in Great Britain, because it apprehended that the classes which you are now asked to enfranchise would rise against the law in behalf of the convicts. You have to ask yourselves also whether the enlargement of the Franchise in Ireland at this juncture is likely to be acceptable to the classes to be enfranchised in Great Britain. Are the rural Irish, who scarcely three years

ago were in a state of veiled rebellion; whose atrocities toward man and beast disgraced us in the eyes of the whole world; and who are still with difficulty kept under by strong garrisons and stern measures of coercion,—are these classes equally fitted for enfranchisement with the law-abiding and loyal populations of the English and Scottish counties? It is a very dubious compliment to the two latter to group them up in the same category with the former. You have to consider, also, whether a concession of the Franchise to the Irish peasants will tend to continue those “substantial improvements” which the Ministry alone describes in Ireland. You gave them a Land Act which conferred substantial benefits and privileges upon them at the expense of their landlords, and you found that they gave you no return in loyalty and orderly conduct. Experience has taught you that there can be no hope for Ireland so long as it is left a safe and apparently lucrative field for agitation. And now the Government proposal of Reform will have the effect of widening the influence and increasing the power of Irish agitation, and of greatly strengthening the hands of those who represent it in Parliament. Is this result, my lords and gentlemen, a thing to be desired? Is it not rather an issue that, beyond all others, you are bound, in the general interests of the country, to avoid? Before you assent to the Government’s proposals of Reform, you must first satisfy yourselves that it is just and expedient to place the more than half-rebellious rural populations of Ireland on the same footing with the loyal labourers of our English counties; that the condition of Ireland is such that the penal laws can be lifted from off her before

the rural Franchise is enlarged; that a measure so disturbing to popular feeling will not directly tend to still further unsettle the country; and that it will not impede your own legislative work and embarrass the House in general by returning to Parliament an increased number of Irish members pledged to disturb the Union and disintegrate the Empire. These are points upon which you are bound to form your own conclusions; and unless the Ministry be able to remove all doubts regarding them, you will have to ask yourselves (1) whether Ireland ought not to be left outside the proposed Reform Bill; and (2), if this cannot be done, whether Reform should not be altogether postponed until Ireland is in a position to participate in it without risk to general interests. A Reform Bill excluding Ireland would be a political blunder; a bill including it at present would be a political crime.

You have also to make up your minds whether you will accept from the Government one half of its scheme of Reform upon trust, and without being told of what nature the other, and not less important half, is to be. You have been very liberal of your confidence to the present Government; has it hitherto so far justified your reliance, as to induce you to accept an enlargement of the Franchise without knowing upon what principle it will proceed in the Redistribution of seats? If you are credulous enough to put your faith in the integrity of the Government, will the country either share your credulity or condone it when you are undeceived? You will not have been prepossessed in favour of Ministerial ideas on the subject of Redistribution, if Sir Charles Dilke has given correct expression to them with respect to a probable

gain of seats by Ireland. But neither Parliament nor the country has ever been content to accept Reform without a definite scheme of Redistribution attached to it, even from Cabinets that had greater claims upon its confidence. You may remember as worthy of imitation the precedent set by Earl Grosvenor in 1866, when Mr Gladstone, after having pledged himself to the utmost to resist the amendment for conjoining Redistribution with the Franchise Bill, was immediately compelled by the smallness of his majority to yield to the strong feeling of Parliament, and ultimately, to abandon office. What Mr Gladstone has said in sarcasm about the "Redistribution of Seats" is really sober truth, both to you and to the country :—

"In the battle of the franchise there hovers on the flanks an awful phantom. It is yclept 'redistribution of seats.' This hobgoblin decided the battle, and slew the Ministry of 1866. *It may decide more battles, and slay more Ministries.* Its name acts with a subtle and magic power on the inner consciousness, not the outer one of the 'member' for our city or borough. When the enfranchisement arguments, long floating dimly before him, begin a little to warm his blood, or, if not that, yet to make him feel uncomfortable, all this is in the outer consciousness alone. But when the black banner waves in his eye, on which are written the spectral letters 'redistribution of seats,' they operate as drastically as if they were *mene mene tekel upharsin*, they go straight to the seat of life, to the very heart and mind, not indeed of the man but of the 'member.'"¹

It will seem to you that the Premier forgets the political lessons which he has received, as well as the political speeches which he delivers. Or is he so confident

of his power to dispose absolutely of the minds of a majority of the Commons, that he can now afford to toss to the winds the warnings of previous experience? The introduction of a Franchise Bill without Redistribution is a presumption upon your good-nature or indifference which the most successful and best-trusted Minister has no right to show. Coming from a Ministry whose career has been one unbroken series of failures, it is a political impertinence.

There is another reason why the enlargement of the franchise should receive more careful consideration at your hands than previous measures of reform have required. Since the last Reform Bill became law, the American Caucus has been naturalised among us; and, short as has been our experience of its working, it is already found to be eating like a cancer into the heart of our free representative institutions. We have heard that from a few seeds introduced into the island only half a century ago, a noxious weed called *lantana* has now spread over the whole colony of Ceylon. The Caucus threatens to spread as rankly among ourselves. Many of you, gentlemen, are well acquainted with this new institution; not a few of you have been bullied and snubbed by it, some of you even in public. You had to *ko-tow* to it for your present seats, and you are kept in a lively recollection that the continuance of its favour depends upon your docility and subserviency to its will. It has interposed between you and the electors, so that you cannot longer look upon yourselves as representing the free voice of the constituencies. It has now thrust itself on the other side, between you and the Government. It has successfully

¹ Nov. 1877, Gladstone's *Gleanings of Past Years*, vol. i. p. 169.

arrogated to itself that initiative in Parliamentary reform which of right belongs to you. Have your individual experiences of the Caucus so prepossessed you in its favour that you are willing to extend its possible sphere of operations? for it is to such a prospect that its anxiety for the enlargement of the franchise is due. When you find such organisations coercing the electors, tyrannising over yourselves, and dictating to the Government, under the guise of free and advanced institutions, you may well ask yourselves whether the remark made by Burke, that "Liberty is in danger of becoming unpopular to Englishmen," does not apply with more force to our own days than to those of the American war.

A very strong recommendation of any measure of Reform would be, if not finality, at least some prospect of a settled state of the franchise. The country is tired of endless tinkering at the Constitution. As soon as a Ministry begins to feel its hold relaxing on the country, or gets into serious trouble that is likely to ruin its credit with the constituencies, so certainly is a scheme of Parliamentary Reform produced. But, of course, even Parliamentary Reform is capable of being exhausted.

"Ah! where shall you go then for
pastime,
When the worst that can be has been
done?"

If the Premier were to bring forward a measure that would set the franchise at rest for half a century, or for even twenty years, you might be excused for closing with it; but

"—close behind him

Stalks sullen Bertram, like a sorcerer's fiend,

Pressing to be employed."

Mr Chamberlain is ready with his

project of universal suffrage, paid representatives, and equal electoral districts, as soon as Mr Gladstone has given him a stepping-stone for the introduction of the Caucus into the counties. If the present measure is only to be temporary, had you not much better wait until people have made up their minds as to what form the franchise should ultimately assume, and then deal with the subject once and for all? You may assure yourselves that Reform by instalment as a means of rousing the country has been played out. You will never again evoke the enthusiasm which carried through the first Reform Bill. Though you were to throw out the Bill in the Commons on the second reading, not a single cudgel would be brandished in the counties of England or Scotland—not a rough would risk three months' hard labour on its behalf. If there were any rioting—the *ultima ratio* of Reformers—it would be confined to the manufacturing boroughs, which really have nothing to do with the business.

The question before you, my lords and gentlemen, is, therefore, Reform or no Reform during the present Parliament; and the intrinsic merits of the Government measure are really a secondary matter. Ask yourselves these queries: Was the enlargement of the franchise a mission entrusted to you at the general election? Is there sufficient evidence of a desire for enfranchisement among the unenfranchised rural classes? Can the subject be satisfactorily treated without a scheme of Redistribution? Is it safe in the present condition of the country to enfranchise the Irish peasantry?—and by the answers you return, your conduct towards the Bill ought to be determined. It will be no proof of your hostility to Reform in the

future, should you be forced to the conclusion that neither the present time nor the present Parliament is fitted for dealing with so momentous a matter.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

You cannot be congratulated upon the way in which you opened the session, and a very unsatisfactory impression was made by both sides of the House upon the public mind. An amendment was proposed challenging the delusive statements made in the Queen's Speech regarding the Egyptian policy of the Ministry, asserting its continued want of success; that native authority had been destroyed without the provision of a substitute; and that the British position in Egypt was entailing responsibilities upon the country which the Ministry had taken no adequate steps to meet. Considering the importance of the subject, the amendment would probably have come with more force from the leader of the Opposition. However there were reasonable expectations that it would give rise to a debate of considerable length, and would extract from the Government some information. You had all had plenty to say upon the subject of Egypt, on one side or the other, during the recess, and had left the electors under the impression that your chief anxiety was to repeat your views with greater effect from your places in the House. But what happened? When Mr Bourke sat down there was no one on the front Treasury Bench to take up the defence of the Government; and when Baron de Worms had seconded the amendment, there was no one on either the Ministerial or the Opposition side prepared to continue the debate. A division was inevitable,

and in a very thin House a majority of fifty-seven affirmed the policy of Government. The incident has not done you credit in the eyes of the country. It conveyed the impression of trifling with a subject which has rightly come to be regarded as one of the gravest importance. It has raised among Conservatives the painful feeling that the leaders of the Opposition are not so active in pressing home upon the Ministry the views of their supporters as they ought to be; and that a surprise may very probably, as on this occasion, find them without resources. The Government likewise emerged from the episode under a cloud. You as well as the country have reason to complain of want of respect in its treatment of the amendment on Egypt. An important issue was started; the Government showed itself as unprepared to meet it as the Opposition was to press it; and so judgment was entered for the defendant by default. Nor did the apology of the Government do much to improve the position. According to the Premier's explanation, Sir Charles Dilke had been specially told off to reply on the side of the Government, but by his own account, after having patiently listened to the speech of the mover of the amendment, he loftily left inferior Tory satellites to say their worst of the Government, and betook himself to some more congenial field of intellectual or physical recreation. Was this, gentlemen, the sort of treatment which you expected or deserved from the representative of Government upon the Treasury Bench? Was it such as the House of Commons would have tolerated in days gone by? You could hardly fail in your own minds to couple with Sir Charles Dilke's flight the other "unfore-

seen and calamitous necessity" which had overtaken the Egyptian policy of the Ministry; and to acquit him of disrespect, while you convicted the Government of panic. You can scarcely doubt that the news of Baker Pasha's defeat had again thrown the Government helplessly upon its beam-ends; and that it required time and deliberation to readapt its policy to the altered circumstances of the Egyptian situation before committing itself in your presence. Had the Government frankly admitted this, you would have readily granted them time to make up their minds and explain their position; but had you had any idea that a debate unpleasant to the Government was to be craftily burked by a trick of procedure, the country does you the credit of believing that a large majority would have insisted upon the responsibility of the Government for the condition of Egypt being there and then fully discussed. It was a piece of sharp practice which only one of the younger and less experienced members of the Ministry would have essayed, for the Cabinet would have rather had Egypt dealt with as an amendment to the Address than as a direct Vote of Censure in both Houses. It was folly to think that a subject so important could be thus shunted off; and whatever convenience Ministers found in a temporary respite must have been more than neutralised by the disadvantage of defending a position upon which they had been unwillingly brought to bay.

If the incident was not altogether creditable to the Government, it was equally unfortunate for you gentlemen who sit on the front Opposition Bench. You exhibited to your supporters the painful spectacle of men who,

having been overtaken by a surprise, do not know whither to turn themselves. A leader ought never to allow himself to be surprised; or if perforce he finds himself taken by surprise, his immediate duty is to snatch what advantage he can from the situation. The Conservative leaders appeared as helpless over their blunder as Ministers on their part were over their "unforeseen and calamitous necessity." The thanks of the party were on this occasion due to Lord Randolph Churchill, whose intrepidity and persistency rescued the Conservatives from the muddle into which they had been thrown, and who, by raising a discussion on the refusal of the Government to continue the debate on Mr Bourke's amendment, provoked the Ministry into giving an opening for a Vote of Censure. Lord Randolph's conduct deserves all the more commendation that he sur-rendered the moving of the Vote of Censure, though he might justly have claimed that honour to himself, into the hands of the leader of the Opposition. Disappointed as Conservatives naturally are that their leaders should have inaugurated the session by a failure, there is some amends in the prospect of a fusion of views between the Opposition and that section of itself which has been nicknamed the "Fourth Party." Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Randolph Churchill have one aim in common,—to rid the country of a Ministry whose conduct is injuring interests at home and lowering our credit abroad. If their exertions in the cause bring them into rivalry, the better for the party, which will gain by their emulation. Let each continue to provoke the other to good works; there is room for and great need of both in the present circumstances of Conservatism. We want

outspoken criticism and forward action, as well as careful argument and skilful diplomacy. The man who lands the party in power, and can show himself capable of maintaining it in authority, will meet with the due reward of his services—*Tros Tyriusve*. Each section of the Conservatives may well learn, to its advantage, something from the other. If Lord Randolph can infuse part of his courage and readiness into the leaders of the Opposition, it will do them no harm; and if they on their side can imbue him with their discretion and self-control, the party will be the gainer by a statesman who may yet be destined to play an important part in its history. Conservatives cannot continue to subsist upon the memory of the late Lord Beaconsfield. They must initiate for themselves, and, above all, act for themselves—act, too, with vigour and decision. No enthusiasm can be expected from the constituencies until the Conservative leaders have shown sufficient “pluck” to justify it.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

The result of the Vote of Censure in your respective Houses was exactly what the country expected. It was only right that the defects, the palpable blunders in the Government's treatment of Egyptian affairs—the cowardly policy which has taken credit for every success and disowned the responsibility of every failure; the utter disregard for the feelings of the people, whose country we had taken into our keeping; the blame for the loss of the immense territories of Egypt in inner Africa, for a series of brutal massacres which have tarnished the British control,—it was not only right but imperatively necessary that these should be brought home to the

Government. Of all these charges public opinion in the country had already convicted the Ministry, without thinking it necessary to call for any attempted excuse. But beyond fastening upon the Ministry the proportion of guilt which duly belongs to it, and exhibiting it in all the odium of its culpability before the country, there were good reasons why the Conservatives should not show undue anxiety to carry their pressure further. Events had reached a crisis so great as to compel the Ministry to act; and you were content that at such a crisis it should have an opportunity of striving to redeem its past errors by an active and open policy. It was therefore fitting that in the House of Lords, where clearer and more intelligent views of foreign affairs are always taken than in the other place, and where a vote of censure would not necessarily imperil the existence of the Government, an emphatic condemnation of the Ministry's course of action should have been pronounced by a large majority of Peers. In the House of Commons no such result could have been looked for. It could not have been expected that you, gentlemen, who had faithfully backed up Mr Gladstone through right and wrong during the past four sessions; who had sworn that white was black, and black white, just as he chose to dictate; who had professed to worship him as a heaven-born statesman, while you saw Ireland passing from bad to worse under his remedial legislation; who had complacently supported him subverting the laws of property in pursuance of a fruitless policy; and who have, above all, no desire to face the risks of a general election,—the country never expected *you* to turn upon your leaders for such a matter as the

mismanagement of Egypt. It was not of much consequence that you would compromise yourselves in the eyes of Europe by sharing in the odium which the Ministry has earned in the estimation of every Continental cabinet. You have gone through enough since 1880 to have case-hardened the most sensitive of senators. You have learned your new "lessons in massacre" with an aptitude and docility which must be immensely gratifying to your teacher. It was even matter of surprise that some of the weaker brethren among you should have felt it necessary to clear your consciences by signing an address to the Government calling on it to interpose on behalf of the Sudan garrisons. The Conservative party are, on the whole, under some obligations to you for again swallowing your scruples amid circumstances of extreme difficulty. Such is the condition to which the Cabinet has reduced Egyptian affairs, that no statesmen, however ambitious, would care to accept office as the price of having to take over the doleful legacy which the Government would have to leave them in Egypt at present.

The case against the Ministry, as presented by Lord Salisbury to the Peers and by Sir Stafford Northcote to the Commons, contained a complete exposure of the discreditable course which the Government has pursued towards the Khedive and his territory; but you may reasonably have doubted if the bitter feeling which animates the country on the subject was adequately represented in either speech. In the meetings held in London and many of our great cities, a far more vigorous and emphatic condemnation of the conduct of Ministers was heard than found expression in either of your Houses. The popular verdict may

be briefly summed up in saying that the conduct of the Government was "mean and un-English-like." When people have with little trouble—almost, it may be said, upon the evidence of their senses—formed such a conclusion, they are generally not much concerned about having their reasons analysed for them. But both Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote established uncontrovertibly that there were good and sufficient reasons for the popular judgment. The facts which they adduced went to support even graver charges than those of vacillation and inconsistency. They proved that the policy of the Government, so far as any definite and continuous policy can be said to have directed its action, was of a purely selfish character, aiming rather at the maintenance of its own political predominance at home than at a conscientious discharge of the obligations which had fallen upon it in consequence of its intervention in Egypt—that it was much more concerned to please the Radicals than to benefit the Egyptians. And they might have argued that ever since Tel-el-Kebir we had been working by rule of thumb, directing our action by the recurrence of "unforeseen and calamitous necessities," rather than striving with all the powers at our command to prevent these.

In estimating the extent of the Government's errors, it is very important to determine whether or not the Government included the Sudan within the sphere of its responsibility at the time when the battle of Tel-el-Kebir made it arbiter of the destinies of Egypt. If it did so, then the "calamitous necessity" mentioned in the Queen's speech ought to have been both foreseen and prevented. If the Government could not foresee that the circumstances of the

Soudan would, if not promptly redressed, lead to disaster, then it must plead guilty of political incapacity; if it did recognise the danger and was content to trifle with it, trusting that in the chapter of accidents some means of evading its duty might be presented, then its conduct was criminal towards the Khedive and dishonest towards the European Powers from whom Mr Gladstone professes to hold a commission—a commission, however, which does not appear to have been placed in his hands, and is, according to his own admission, to be found only “in the records of the Conference of Constantinople.” When we found ourselves masters of Lower Egypt after Tel-el-Kebir, we knew quite well that the Soudan provinces had been in revolt since 1881, that the Mahdi had given a dangerous fanatical direction towards the rebellion, and that the insurrection of Arabi had practically left him master of that country. Previous to this, the Egyptian forces under Abd-el-Kader had proved competent to deal with the Mahdi and his followers. Little reflection would have sufficed to show that the revolution in Lower Egypt must give a great impetus to the Mahdi’s cause, especially as, in the disorganised and broken state of the Egyptian army, it would be impossible to send reinforcements above the Cataracts. Then was the time when a Government worthy of the name would have made up its mind either to declare that the Soudan must be abandoned, as Egypt was unable longer to hold it, or to resolve that, as it was to be retained, immediate and efficient steps must at once be taken to reduce it to peace. The Government, however, never dreamt of the abandonment of the Soudan until it became plainly

obvious that only its active interference could save the province. Indeed, as Lord Salisbury showed, the Government not only accepted the responsibility for the Soudan along with the rest of Egypt, but endeavoured at the outset to pursue a sound and sober, though very inadequate, course of policy with regard to that province. Under its auspices a British officer was sent to investigate the condition of the Soudan shortly after Tel-el-Kebir; and the reconstruction of the Egyptian Government included a bureau for dealing with its affairs. In consequence of Colonel Stewart’s reports, Lord Dufferin represented to the Ministry the propriety of the Egyptian Government confining its efforts to the re-establishment of its authority in Senaar within the forks of the Nile, and leaving the unconsolidated provinces of Kordofan and Darfur to be dealt with as means or opportunity should offer. The same advice was repeated yet more emphatically a few months later by Sir Edward Malet, when Hicks Pasha, under pressure of the Egyptian authorities, was on the point of setting out for the reconquest of the rebel provinces lying to the west of the White Nile. But by that time the Government, on the departure of Lord Dufferin, had entrenched itself behind a policy of selfish indifference. “Report decision of Egyptians as soon as you can, taking care to offer no advice,” was the order of the Ministry that had a commission, “in the records of the Conference of Constantinople,” to restore order and tranquillity in Egypt. But it was added, “point out that the Egyptian Government should make up their minds what their policy is to be, and carefully consider the question in its financial aspect.” Finances are the sinews of war;

and a Government that held itself responsible for the finances of Egypt must also be held responsible for Egyptian expeditions, as the greater includes the less. So long as there was little or no responsibility involved, the Government was well content to bear it; but as soon as difficulties began to appear, it left the Egyptian Government to its own unaided devices; and the more pressing the condition of the Soudan became, the more the Government continued to hold itself aloof from the interests of the Khedive and his country. From his arrival in the Soudan, in the beginning of March, until the commencement of October, General Hicks was able to hold his own in the Nile Doab and in the country about Khartoum; and had he been allowed to continue there, the disasters that have since taken place would probably have been averted. But the Egyptians pressed for the Kordofan campaign, the British Government made no sign, and General Hicks had no option save to undertake it. He had only 5000 men, and he reported that at least 10,000 would be necessary. But where was the other 5000 to come from? We had converted the Egyptian army into an ornamental body—halfsoldiers, halfmilitiamen, and not very much of either—under the command of Sir Evelyn Wood, and enlisted for service in Lower Egypt only. In the month of August, before starting, General Hicks again appealed to Sir Edward Malet, stating that he had neither money, food, nor camels; and the answer he received was that Sir Edward was debarred by his orders from offering advice, but was ready to transmit his telegrams. The Cabinet was thus well informed of the wretched condition in which General Hicks's expedition marched to be massacred; and the fact that

it was thus prepared for what was to come, explains the indifference with which the news of the "unforeseen and calamitous" disaster of Kashgate was received. "We are not to blame," said the Government; "we have carefully abstained from having anything to do with the matter; you had better leave the country if you cannot hold the Soudan." Now, my lords and gentlemen, had not the Government all this time led you to believe that it was playing the part of a terrestrial Providence towards Egypt. If it felt that it was responsible at the time when Hicks Pasha was pleading for supplies and reinforcements, it disgracefully failed in its obligations; if it had made up its mind that it was not responsible, then it was deliberately deceiving both you and the country. If in the months of June and August last the real condition of the Soudan, such as it had been made known to the Government, had been placed before your Houses, coupled with Hicks Pasha's representations, would the Government have dared to take up the attitude that it assumed in its telegrams and despatches to Sir Edward Malet about that time? No, it would not; and no "unforeseen and calamitous necessity" would have compelled us to again put our forces into the field. Both your Houses have sufficient reason to complain that the Government has adopted an irresponsible course under very critical circumstances, without taking you into its confidence. But your experience must by this time have convinced you that the present Ministry never takes the trouble to consult you until after it has got into trouble, and then not so much with a view to profit by your advice as of obtaining your pardon for its errors. And yet the statesmen who com-

pose the present Cabinet are mostly the very men who for six years shrieked forth denunciations of Conservative reticence, and of the iniquity of a Ministry not carrying Parliament along with it through every step of its foreign policy.

It was unfortunate for Egypt that your Houses were not sitting when the news of the massacre of Hicks Pasha's force reached England; and that Ministers had to blunder on unaided, and there is reason to believe distracted by conflicting opinions among themselves, for three months longer. During the month immediately after the Kashgate disaster, the Government too evidently did not know what to do. It received no assistance from the incompetent successor of Sir Edward Malet, whose presence at Cairo in a position of so great importance can only be explained by the unfortunate predominance which Lord Northbrook has acquired in the present Government. At first the Cabinet clung to its former position of abstention from interference, and when appealed to, offered only negative counsels. It had no difficulty in recommending the Egyptian Government to "scuttle out" of the country, with an authority that possessed all the weight of experience. But the Egyptian Government saw that "scuttling" out of the country was not so easy a matter as British Ministers, with ample resources to facilitate and secure an inglorious retreat, had found it to be. It was easy to suggest the abandonment of all the territory south of Wady Halfa; but there were Egyptian garrisons scattered through the Soudan, and a Government that was not able to reinforce Hicks Pasha's army was not likely to be in a position to extricate its posts after that army had been utterly

destroyed, and the rebels, in increased strength, were enjoying all the popularity of their victory. Then, even supposing the Egyptian forces safe behind Wady Halfa, there was a frontier, untenable, from a military point of view, to be held against a powerful army of fanatics who were little likely to be restrained by a political boundary. Why, to hold such a line from Wady Halfa to Massowah would have required, in permanence, at least six times the number of troops that would have been needed for completely crushing the rebellion in the Soudan, and for re-establishing the Khedive's authority on a firm basis! The Egyptian Government might be pardoned for thinking that it was a better and, in the end, a cheaper policy, to quell the rebels once and for all, and repossess itself of the Soudan, which, when order was restored, could be held by moderate garrisons, than to accept a new and indefensible frontier with a hostile and fanatic enemy on the other side of it, and to have the future charge of maintaining a force along it sufficient to repel at any point the hordes which the Mahdi might lead to its attack. Such considerations had no place in the Government's calculations, and the events which will subsequently compel it to take them into account will, of course, be declared to be "unforeseen and calamitous."

The near approach of your resuming your sittings put an end to the policy of indifference which the Government had shown towards the difficulties of the Egyptian Ministry. All through the recess it had succeeded in deluding the country into the belief that it was loyally discharging the self-imposed task of assisting the Khedive in ordering his affairs and in

maintaining the integrity of his territories. But as soon as you demanded papers the truth must come out; so immediately after the New Year Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville began to take steps for mollifying the indignation with which they rightly anticipated that you would learn their selfish treatment of Egyptian affairs. On January 4th, the latter initiated a new policy of activity and avowed responsibility, by removing the Egyptian Ministry which had refused to lend itself to the dismemberment of the country, and by forming a new administration under Nubar Pasha, which was pledged to carry out whatever instructions it received from Downing Street. Whether or not this step was wise and just, results will determine; we must at least concede that the attitude of the late Egyptian Ministry was patriotic, if impracticable. Meanwhile the Government had taken other steps in the direction of avowing its responsibility. The house of Rothschild had been ready to lend Egypt a million sterling upon no better security, according to Mr Gladstone, than that the Government approved of the accommodation. Considering the caution and prudence with which the affairs of the great banking house are transacted, you, gentlemen, will come to the conclusion that the Messrs Rothschild have been let further into the confidence of the Government than has been vouchsafed to yourselves, and that the approbation of the Ministry is regarded by them as tantamount to your guarantee, which the Government will doubtless have to ask you for when the proper time comes.

You would doubtless have thought that Lord Granville's despatch of the 4th January, assuming direct responsibility for the settlement of

the Soudan question, would have been immediately followed by some active steps to extricate the Soudanese garrisons, and to cover the new frontier against the advance of the fanatics by moving up our forces, then in garrison at Cairo, towards Upper Egypt. This, however, was too practical a step for our imaginative Ministry to take. It arrested General Gordon on the point of embarking for the Congo in the Belgian service, and despatched him post haste to the Soudan to rescue by his single hand the beleaguered garrisons, and arrange for the abandonment of the country. The move was one that only a thoroughly reckless Government would have made; the mission such as only a Don Quixote would have accepted. The chances were a hundred to one that Gordon never would reach Khartoum; and on that one chance the Ministry, with the spirit of desperate political gambling which has of late animated it, staked its existence. It was Gordon's good fortune, under the favour of Providence, that ever enabled him to reach Khartoum in safety; and the Ministry deserves no more credit for his successful journey than it would have accepted blame had he been butchered while *en route* by the Arabs. The selection of General Gordon marked the desperate condition in which the Government felt itself to be placed. No man had more fiercely criticised the conduct of the Government with regard to equatorial Egypt, or had spoken more strongly against the abandonment of the Soudan; and it was a confession of error to invoke his aid at the eleventh hour. But the powers with which General Gordon was intrusted were not less remarkable than the character of his mission; and they were such as no Ministry has ever before ventured to confer upon one

of its agents without your concurrence. You have reason, my lords and gentlemen, to complain of the invasion of your rights in the matter of General Gordon's powers. He is sent out to hand over to the rebels the Soudan, which, after all, is neither ours nor the Khedive's to dispose of: to make away with a portion of Ottoman territory which we have debarred the rightful suzerain from striking a blow to preserve. And all this was done without your knowledge, and without asking your sanction.

Neither General Gordon's instructions, nor the interpretation which he places upon them, will give your Houses much assurance that satisfactory results will arise out of this new and extraordinary diplomacy. General Gordon at first understood his duty to be to restore the country to the families of the petty sultans who existed at the time of Mehemet Ali's conquest, and to leave the Mahdi out of account. But, as the Mahdi is decidedly master of the situation, he may not unnaturally decline to be left out of account; and even the Government seems to have had foresight enough to realise this fact, for we may safely infer from the language of General Gordon's memorandum that the alternative had been presented to him of handing over the arsenals to the Mahdi. General Gordon seems to have convinced himself, immediately on his arrival at Khartoum, that he would be most likely to succeed by negotiating with the Mahdi; and he lost no time in proclaiming him as the ruler of the country, and even went the length of announcing tolerance of slavery, to the consternation of the Cabinet. General Gordon's proclamation runs thus:—

“I am desirous to restore your hap-

piness and tranquillity. I know you are very grieved at the prohibition of the slave traffic, which by convention is forbidden under heavy penalties. I have decided to permit the same, and have ordered the town-criers to give publicity to this decision, so that nobody can prevent you. Every one having domestic servants may consider them his property, and may dispose of them.”

A sweet *bonne bouche* for our humane Government and for the philanthropists of Exeter Hall to roll under their tongues! At first he had proposed to hand over the arsenals and stores to the sultans, so as to give them a better chance of being able to cope with the Mahdi. Now he will bestow the arsenals upon the Mahdi, so that he may be able to crush any opposition that the sultans may offer. Thus, with a blessing to the “pull devil, pull baker” struggle which is left behind, the Ministry convoys Egyptian authority out of the Soudan, and locks behind it, in the face of civilisation, the northern door of access to Central Africa, only to be opened when the danger or disgrace outside becomes intolerable in the eyes of Europe.

Now from such a policy one of two things must result. Either the Mahdi will conquer the Sultans or the Sultans will put down the Mahdi, as the Government seem to hope, without any grounds to justify such an expectation. In the former case we shall have for a neighbour a fanatic empire, whose central point of policy will be a deadly hostility to all the states under infidel domination lying between it and the sea-board,—a state that, by means of its religious influence actively propagated through the *Khouan*—those “semi-religious, semi-political confraternities,” which, according to Mr Broadley, “seem destined to cover the whole of Northern Africa with a web of

Moslem freemasonry"¹—will spread disaffection not only in Lower Egypt, but in Tripoli, in Tunis, reaching even to Algeria. To leave a fanatic state thus to consolidate and strengthen itself under an existing religious delusion, is a danger that every European power which has the least interest in North Africa will at once protest against. To such a state the possession of the Eastern Soudan and the Red Sea littoral would be a primary religious necessity, as affording access to the holy places in Arabia for the due performance of the *Haj*. It will be able to excite disturbances, as it has already begun to do in Turkish Arabia, and between the two shores the navigation of the Red Sea will be imperilled. If we are to leave the Soudan to the Mahdi, we may abandon to him also the sea-coast from Suakim southward without further controversy. Ask yourselves, my lords and gentlemen, before it is too late, whether such an arrangement is calculated to serve our interests, and save our honour in the eyes of Europe?

If, on the other hand, the sultans, with the aid of the arsenals which General Gordon benevolently bestows upon them for the purpose of pitting them against the Mahdi and provoking further bloodshed, should prove successful, what are we to expect? These sultans, before the time of Mehemet Ali, and for many years after, were simply slave-dealers on a grand scale. It was by traffic in slaves that their power and their influence were maintained; and it was from this traffic that they derived the means of subsistence for themselves and their followers. They have always looked with regret at the restraints on slavery, and they will immediately

resume their old courses as soon as they regain their footing in the country. It seems to be considered that if Egypt hold the Red Sea littoral, a sufficient check will be maintainable. But the presence of a strong force and a considerable fleet will be also necessary; while, if fanaticism continue its sway in the upper provinces, the Eastern Soudan will always be in danger of attack. If the proclamations which are attributed to General Gordon are authentic, he seems to have already conceded the freedom of the slave trade to the Soudanese, which was all that was wanting to complete the discredit of the Ministry. The Government can have no escape from the responsibility for General Gordon's measures; and if he go on as he has begun, further material for a second and sterner Vote of Censure will not be long in accumulating. Truly, my lords and gentlemen, the Ministry that asks you to sanction such a policy pays no high compliment to your conscientiousness,—a policy that proposes to set the sultans and the Mahdi against each other to fight out the sovereignty of the Soudan, and to substitute for the rule of Egypt—bad enough, no doubt, but still capable of amelioration—a dangerous fanatic despot or an oligarchy of slave-traders.

Short as is the time since General Gordon arrived at Khartoum, he has already been there long enough to inspire you with feelings of astonishment and dismay at his proceedings. Notwithstanding the sense of responsibility that you must feel for his conduct, your relationship to his doings is enviable compared with the position of the Ministry. His slavery proclamation came upon the Cabinet like a bomb-shell, from the shock

¹ Tunis Past and Present. By A. M. Broadley. Vol. i. p. 22.

of which it has only recovered sufficiently to formulate as an answer to all questions on the subject that, "as far as its information yet goes, its confidence in General Gordon is quite undiminished." The fact is, that the Government has placed itself completely in General Gordon's hands, and it is quite powerless to influence his conduct. All his antecedents warrant the belief that any attempt to check or thwart him would be followed by an immediate resignation of his commission.

From a Government that had resolved to leave the Soudan to such a cruel alternative, you could not have expected much regret over the defeat of Baker Pasha and the slaughter of his forces at Teb, or any overflow of sorrow for the fate of the gallant defenders of Sinkat, and of their hapless women and children, or for the fall of Tokar after its brave but fruitless defence, waiting weeks in vain for the succours that never came. Tears with Mr Gladstone are a precious political resource, only to be shed when it serves his party to arouse sympathy; high-minded horror can only be given expression to when it is likely to damage political opponents. Think of the virtuous indignation into which we were lashed over Bulgarian atrocities! Remember our horror at blood-guiltiness, when we had the honour of our flag to retrieve in Boerland! Such humbug would be ludicrous, if it were not revolting to national dignity.

The answers returned by Lord Granville and Mr Gladstone to the Opposition impeachment evaded

every pointed charge which Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote had brought forward. About all that the former Minister had to say was that we had tried hard to effect some kind of internal reforms in Lower Egypt—the best specimen of which is the useless and mutinous army that we have organised—and that the Ministry had been consistent in its policy, though he was not very certain what that policy was. A policy which should be like an umbrella, would, Lord Granville sapiently thought, be about the proper thing—one that could be put up in foul weather and taken down in fair. But sometimes the wind is strong enough to blow an umbrella to bits; at other times it cannot be got to go up at the right moment—which seems to be generally the case with the Government "gingham"—and where are our parachute politicians then?¹ Mr Gladstone, as was to be expected, took a higher flight of imagination. All the trouble, he declared, sprang out of the Dual Control; the Dual Control was established by the Tories; *argal*, the Tories were to blame for the whole difficulty—massacre of Hicks Pasha, abandonment of the Soudan, and all other evils, past, present, and future. How often has Mr Gladstone, in the manifold tribulations of his political life, had recourse to the childish excuse of "Please, sir, it wasn't I—'twas the t'other boy"! No wonder though this original and powerful defence draws cries of "Hear! hear!!" from you gentlemen on the Ministerial benches, or that Liberalism in general should raise its hands in rapture over the utterances of its gifted leader. The only speech on

¹ "Vos inumbrelles video." Canning's translation of Jekyl's

"I say, my good fellows,
As you've no umbrellas."

the Liberal side which deserved even a passing attention was that of Mr Forster; and this was due not so much to what he meant to say, as to what he meant to do. Mr Forster, indeed, treated the Government with not less contempt than Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote had shown; but he professed his intention all the same to negative the Vote of Censure. His position is quite intelligible. He was fully sensible that there was room for censuring the Government; but, considering the difficulties of effecting a change of Ministry in the critical condition of Egyptian affairs, and that the Government had now done what it ought to have done three months ago, Mr Forster would give them another chance. Mr Forster's example must have saved the Government not a few votes, as showing that there were still some traditions of honesty and honour left in the Liberal party, and that there was yet a possibility for members of succouring the Government without being confounded with the mechanical majority of 49, which would with equal readiness have supported a Downing Street decree declaratory of the infallibility of Mr Gladstone, if such a dogma were made a Ministerial measure.

The point chiefly to be regretted in the result of the discussion is, not that you have not turned out the Ministry, but that you have failed to extract from it any definite guarantees as to the ultimate policy which it proposes to extend towards Egypt—a matter about which you are all alike interested. You had a right to demand that the Government should now clearly state the definite limits—if any—which it has set in its own mind to our occupation of Egypt, and to our consequent responsibility for

Egyptian affairs; what tasks we propose to perform before our departure; and what securities we are to provide for the maintenance, after we have gone, of the institutions we have set up. The Government is quite as mysterious about its intentions as it was twelve months ago; and for all that you and the country are given to know to the contrary, it may have no more certain standard to guide its course by than Lord Granville and his umbrella. It is no answer to your oft-repeated demand for a definite statement of what the Cabinet proposes to do in Egypt, to turn round and jeer at the Opposition for not coming forward with a policy of its own. It is no part of the duty of an Opposition to formulate a policy; you have that axiom on the authority of our present Ministers, who repeated it to you again and again during the days of the Russo-Turkish and Afghan wars. But there is no need for the Opposition declaring what it would do. The whole country knows that its first course on entering office would be to place British influence in Egypt on such a stable footing as to ensure it against being made the sport of "unforeseen and calamitous necessities;" that it would give such definite assurances regarding its intentions as would raise up the commerce, agriculture, and industry of the country from the ruined condition into which uncertainty of the future has thrown them; that it would realise those reforms which the present Government have been contented with carrying out on paper; that it would root out slavery and preserve the country from the dangers of a fanatical irruption; in a word, that it would rule Egypt for the Egyptians, for the honour and interests of England, and not for the sake of the

support of any party or section of party among ourselves. When we say that the Conservative policy would be exactly the opposite of what the Ministerial policy has been, we specify, as we conceive, its strongest recommendation both to you and to the people of Great Britain.

My LORDS—

When you censured Ministers on their Egyptian failures, you doubtless foresaw that a still more serious duty was before you. You were plainly told that your opinion on Egyptian affairs would not influence the position of the Government, and would presumably have no effect upon its policy. It appears to be the opinion of the present Government that it rests with itself to say when it is to attach importance to your resolutions, and when it is to disregard them. But when the Reform project of which Mr Gladstone has given notice comes up before you, the Ministry must either stand or fall by the result of your deliberations. You have seen in the treatment of the Egyptian Vote of Censure a forecast of the manner in which the Reform Bill will be dealt with by the House of Commons. The mechanical majority which the Premier has at his command will force through the measure, regardless of its imperfections, its injustice, its inexpediency; and even if the Conservative minority succeed in importing more spirit into its opposition than it has recently shown, it cannot be expected to leave much impress on the Bill. The responsibility will therefore fall upon your Lordships of dealing with this question; and the circumstances of the case will attach a most serious importance to your decision. At the same time, you have advantages of forming

an independent opinion upon the extension of the Franchise, to which members of the Lower House cannot lay claim. Your more intimate connection and acquaintance with the rural classes will enable you to understand the extent to which they regard an occupancy franchise as a pressing necessity, and to determine whether or not the demand is a spontaneous one, or is raised on their behalf by political agitators. Your freedom from Ministerial dictation on the one hand, and your immunity from the malevolence of the Caucus on the other, will enable you to approach the subject in an impartial and judicial spirit. You have to consider whether Reform can safely be extended to Ireland: if you conclude that it cannot, then you have to ask yourselves whether the feeling of the rural populations is so impatient for the Franchise that its concession cannot be postponed until Ireland can be expediently included in the general scheme. Will your duty to the constitution admit of your accepting a Reform Bill by itself, in ignorance of the plan of Redistribution which is to follow? Mr Gladstone may possibly give assurances regarding the scheme of Redistribution which commends itself to his judgment; but Mr Gladstone is not immortal, he is not even possessed of the premiership for life, and he cannot bind his successor by his own promises. Let your Lordships reflect upon the possibility of passing a Reform Bill, to be followed by a measure of Redistribution, prepared, let us say, by Mr Chamberlain. Can you accept one half of a measure of such importance from a Cabinet in which the opinions on this subject are so divided, and trust that the composition and balance of the Ministry will remain un-

altered for other twelve months, to bring out the other and more important half? It is for you to say whether any Government is justified in putting such a proposal before your House. If you agree that a Reform Bill, to be immediately applied to Ireland, and unaccompanied by definite proposals of Redistribution, is an unsafe measure, your duty will be clear, though it may not be pleasant. You will have to boldly face the cry of obstructiveness, and turn a deaf ear to those who seek to assail your firmness by threatening the abolition of hereditary legislators. Your Chamber, my lords, stands in no danger of abolition unless you yourselves pave the way for its extinction by effacing your influence. Compromise is an excellent principle; but when compromise is interpreted to mean concession always on one side, it usually ends in the conceding party compromising itself out of existence. You have been threatened with being made a Chamber for registering the decrees of the House of Commons; on this question of Reform a lower depth is opened up before you. You are to be made a court of registration for the resolutions of the Convention of Caucuses. The situation is likely to call for a display of all the firmness that you can exhibit. No doubt it is hard for you to have to kick against the pricks of Radicalism, but you must remem-

ber that every victory which democracy scores is followed up by a fiercer attack upon your authority. Your position, my lords, painfully resembles that of the Scottish nobles in the old ballad.

“O laith, laith were the gude Scots lords

To wet their high-heeled shoon;
But lang or a' the play was played,
They wat their hats aboon.”

If the Conservative minority in the Lower House is impotent under the pressure of a mechanical majority, it is so much the more incumbent upon the Conservatives among yourselves to redress the balance of parties. The complaints which justly attach to the Conservative leading in the Commons, may be still more strongly expressed of the absence of adequate Conservative action among the Peers. If you are threatened by the Government, you will gain nothing by showing hesitation to send Parliament to the country. So long as the Peers maintain their authority as a free and distinct branch of the Legislature—so long, we are convinced, will the country “thank heaven for a House of Lords.” It will be no evidence of hostility to Reform on your part, if you decide to throw out an inopportune, incomplete, and dangerous measure. You have, at all events, this consolation—a general election may return a better House of Commons; it cannot well send back a worse.

BLACKWOOD'S

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXXII.

APRIL 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

THE STATE OF ART IN FRANCE.

THE distinguished critic, M. Taine, censured, though unconsciously, his native land when he penned his 'Philosophy of Art.' He laid down the law that art is the product of external causes; that the artist does not stand as an isolated unit in society, but forms a vital part of an organic whole greater than himself. The artist is not dissevered or secluded: for him thought and the state of manners are the same as for the public: the voice of art we hear across the distant centuries; but under that sonorous voice we distinguish a low murmur—the grand and multitudinous voice of a people singing in unison. The artist had not been great but by reason of this harmony; he receives the spirit and the body of his art from energies moving around him: the whole family of artists is comprised in an assemblage more vast—a world to the fashion whereof the painter or the sculptor conforms his creations.

These eloquent utterances conform to the stern logic of facts in

a way M. Taine little anticipated. Impartial spectators, at least, will recognise that, in accordance with the principles promulgated, the Fine Arts in France have shared in the calamities of the nation. It were hard indeed to believe that the catastrophe which reduced the Tuileries to a ruin, and at one moment threatened with destruction the treasures of the Louvre, could leave no trace on pictorial and plastic creations, which of all others are known to be peculiarly sensitive to changes in the commonwealth. The arts in France, indeed, over a period little short of a century, have been subjected to cruel ordeals; the genius of French painting has been tossed and tortured by revolution. Religion itself has been overthrown: the church of Notre Dame was in 1793 turned into "The Temple of Reason"; within its walls was celebrated the Feast of the Goddess, impersonated by the wife of a certain printer named Momoro, seated on the high altar, who returned the devotion of her worshippers by

a kiss ! The people have long been divided between scepticism and superstition ; and the artist, sustained by no abiding faith, by turns crowns Apollo, caresses Venus, and crucifies Christ ! Profanity roots out reverence, hate cankers love, and serious aim gives place to levity of mind and cleverness of method. Thus are fulfilled the words of M. Taine : The voice of art we hear across the distant centuries ; but under that sonorous voice we distinguish a low murmur—the grand and multitudinous voice of a people singing in unison !

The political and social drama enacted in Paris has for sensation and disaster hardly a parallel in the world's history. The Republic was proclaimed in 1792 ; “the Reign of Terror” quickly followed, and the King, Queen, Duc d'Orleans, and others fell victims. Bonaparte then restrained licence by the sword, and the streets of Paris weltered in the blood of the mob. During the present century revolutions have recurred with singular regularity, slaughters clear the way for dynasties, and Paris has seldom been sure of tranquillity save on the three occasions when she was held by foreign armies. The Revolution of 1830 had for its precursor three days' fighting ; in 1848, “Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité” were secured only after two days' more slaughter. In June of the same year raged “the bloodiest battle ever fought in the streets of Paris” : 60,000 insurgent workmen asserted their rights against 30,000 Republican troops commanded by General Cavaignac ; 1440 insurgents were killed, and the Archbishop fell while bearing a message of peace. In 1871, the capitulation of Paris and the occupation by the Germans had for a swift sequel the Commune : 30,000 felons were re-

leased from prison and provided with arms ; Paris, a prey to the *petroleuse*, was in flames ; the Tuileries, Hôtel de Ville, and national monuments identified with law and order, were delivered up to the passions of the populace, and the time seemed to have come for the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy that Paris one day shall perish by fire. And like unto the past is the present : the tranquillity now enjoyed for a moment rests on a thin crust beneath which seethe volcanoes. Such, indeed, is the inveterate hatred of kings and dynasties, that the first crowned head who ventures to visit the Republic is hooted through Paris by “Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité” !

The cradle of French art has been rocked on the troubled waves of democracy, and the offspring is as the infant Hercules struggling with serpents. The nation's art has of necessity been cruelly tortured. How, indeed, could it be otherwise ? for the philosophic critic, as we have seen, teaches that the artist forms a vital part of an organic whole greater than himself ; that he receives the spirit and the body of his art from the agencies moving around him. Unfortunately Parisian painters cannot consent to rest passive spectators : to arts they join arms ; they mount with the citizen the barricades, and swell the rabble conflict of licence against law. Gustave Courbet, by landscapes coarse as the scrapings from gutters, had long proclaimed his political proclivities : even in art he raised the banner of revolt ; he repudiated, as befitting a child of democracy, refinement and culture, and went to nature to gather dirt and heap up disorder. Another painter, M. Regnault, also ranks with the brotherhood which gloats on horror and feeds on mas-

sacre. His art, prophetic of his terrible end, was steeped in blood: his never-to-be-forgotten masterpiece, "The Execution in the Moor's Palace," had the brutality of the political party he served. And as was his art, so was his tragic fate: in a bloody sortie from Paris the painter received his death-wound!

Brutal art, like virulent disease, is contagious: the virus germinates, and the young fall victims. Some years ago, among the prize pictures of the students in the French Academy at Rome, we were astounded by M. Morot's "Episode of the Battle of Eaux-Sextiennes," a composition greeted with applause in Paris. The terrific scene is a hell; infuriated amazons, ferocious as fiends, avenge the defeat of the Gauls, and with the feline spring of tigresses, encounter in defenceless nudity the armed force of the Roman cavalry! A composition thus incarnate in devilry may be accounted but the legitimate offspring of generations of men who have waded through blood. Nor can it be pleaded that the infernal spirit has spent its fury; for as recently as last June, *le Prix du Salon* was awarded to M. Rochegrosse, an artist who had barely attained twenty-two years, for his brutal "Andromaque." Again admiration centred in the incredible accumulation of horrors. The scene is laid outside the walls of captured Troy, and lofty steps descending from the summit to the foreground, distribute the tragedy over successive stages. Ulysses, standing at the top, has ordered the infant son of Andromache to be cast from the walls: the mother in the midst struggles to regain her child. Below is the bloody stone used for chopping off heads: nearer the eye are stretched decapitated corpses stripped to the skin; and

among them, in pools of blood, lie scattered severed heads grinning at the spectator, half conscious of life while convulsed in death! In irony, or as if for sake of comic contrast, a four-legged chair has been upset, and the foremost leg, thrust out, leaves the canvas, and stands in actual relief as a piece of carpentry! Realism and brutality are now usually in close fellowship—the one aids the other.

The startling phenomena presented by Parisian picture-galleries point to mental conditions altogether abnormal. Sobriety, common-sense, conscience, decorum—we had almost said moral law—are absolutely thrown aside, as having no concern with the Fine Arts. The Muses enact the parts of Furies or Sirens: the tranquil heights of Parnassus are transformed into the riot of Pandemonium. Audacity is mistaken for genius, and cleverness and eccentricity are accounted the brightest parts of talent. The first aim is to arrest attention: unobtrusive merit might be passed by unobserved; the retiring modesty which once distinguished knowledge, no longer satisfies; and so the artist struggles for display, makes a spectacle, allures by meretricious methods, and startles by catastrophes. The old world is used up, truth grows stale, moderation counts for mediocrity: the latest novelty, unheard-of horrors, impossible situations—all the drama which lies between God and demon—constitute the glory and the shame of French art.

And yet, why does every one go to see the Paris Salon? Why does no one care to visit the yearly exhibitions in Berlin, Munich, or Vienna? Why do not the French trouble to cross the Channel to see our Royal Academy? And wherefore, on the contrary, do our

English artists piece out their pictures in Paris? Reasons, doubtless, must subsist. One cause may be that the Salon, unlike our Royal Academy, is not the home of chartered mediocrity, nor the refuge of dotage. The Salon is rather to be compared with an arena wherein the young and the strong enter into fierce conflict. The contrast with our Academy is striking: the French artist courts difficulties, our English painter eludes them; the French are confident of conquest, while our weaker brethren timidly arm against defeat. Artists in France covet puzzling perplexities, and tackle toughest problems; while the British tyro seeks safety in simplest arrangements, and escapes censure under cover of good intentions.

On the threshold of the inquiry, wherefore the supremacy of French art? account must be taken of the character of the people. Since the brilliant epoch of the Italian Renaissance, no race has appeared in Europe so highly gifted. Then secondly, we must remember that the art-training in Paris, culminating with a pension in Rome, has been and is more highly organised than in any other nation. Thus the most brilliant of talent is forced up by the most thorough of discipline; hence the consummate result.

Moreover, it cannot be denied that the French Renaissance prospered under the amazing activity of the nation. It is true that, so far as the action became excessive, so far as unbridled licence was given to passion, the arts suffered corruption. Still action, though violent, is more vital than stagnation. In Italy literature and art flourished not in times of rest, but of agitation; and so in France, the fruits of the intellect and of the imagination were nourished and

stimulated by powers springing of freedom. Genius creates, liberty incites, training controls: the three constitute the greatness of French art.

French artists being thus supreme, the anomaly is all the more startling, that works are persistently produced which shock the propriety and the moral sense of Europe. The explanation would appear to be, that the nation, through continued political debauch, has become demoralised. The products, it must be admitted, are beyond compare for technical qualities: the drawing, composition, and handling can hardly be surpassed for mastery; but when we seek for attributes which reveal the mind of the artist and the spirit of the age, we discover, as indeed might be anticipated, the symptoms of a great people gone astray. The pure art of Italy was a serene heaven; the brilliant art of Paris is a hell.

But contemporary arts have honourable antecedents. France has a protracted history; she enjoyed periods of comparative rest, when rose vast cathedrals which the iconoclasts of revolution have not been able wholly to deface. She once cherished a sustained and fervent piety; she can quote a calendar of saints who shine as jewels in her crown, and many a sculptured niche and portal bear witness to sacred legends entwined with the living faith of her people. Wild tempests have swept much away; but still enough remains to tell of a nation believing in God as the supreme good, worshipping the true and the beautiful, and fashioning equally life and art after the example of nature around and of heaven above. And one characteristic of medieval work is its immobility: in quietness and peace were settled the unchanging

laws of proportion, symmetry, and beauty, and men built for eternity. Such art has a life beyond life. But the art of to-day is mobile, restless, and fleeting. The kingdom of art, like the world of politics, is broken into pieces and divided into parties, and error for the moment gains the upper hand. But if salvation be still in store for France, she will return to former paths, and gather up the remnants which lie scattered abroad.

Yet certain pages in history are deservedly neglected. Some of the later Bourbons represent a rottenness which could not last, and cannot recur. It is recorded how a king's mistress, lolling on a sofa, with a laugh tossed unopened despatches into the fire! Monarchs reigned who thought of little else than self-indulgence and vainglory, and favourites formed a Court that accounted the common people as serfs. The arts of necessity shared the prevailing corruption: they dissembled truth, and were estranged from nature; they found occupation in regal pomp and hollow show, and their highest vocation lay in the apotheosis of the Grand Monarque. The nation in disgust rushed into revolution; but with the evil was swept away the good, and the dry-rot of dynasties gave place to the murrain of democracy. The storm has not yet blown over: the sky is still heavy with clouds, and in vain does the eye seek in the immediate future for the serene distance of a Claude picture. In place of the Arcadian shepherdess, we encounter the gross field-labourer; for the unbought grace of life we have the latest Parisian fashion; and in lieu of the Provençal song of the Troubadours, the ear is greeted by the "Marseillaise" on a brass band!

The disorganisation which has befallen French art may be traced

through the misgovernments of a century. The transition of rulers has been precipitate: wild changes have been rung on almost every possible political system, whether regal, imperial, constitutional, or republican. And the arts with easy conscience pandered to the powers that were; they swam with the strongest stream—they sided successively with whatever party in the State promised most profit or pleasure. The artist was reckless as the political gambler; and when asked to fill a serious part, he turned a somersault or fired rockets into the sky.

France is the land of paradoxes: in politics she defies the laws of nations, and in the arts sets at naught the order of nature. She reverses the accepted maxim that monarchy secures strength, aristocracy wisdom, democracy honesty; and she has proved, to her cost, the weakness of kings, the folly of nobles, and the fickleness and falsity of peoples. A drama thus cast might easily degenerate into a comedy. Yet, fortunately, no one condition has lasted long enough to bring about the evil—or indeed the good—for which it might seem ordained. Democracy has hitherto enjoyed too short a life to give assurance of the blessings she is presumed to bestow on humanity and art. The Bourbons and the Orleanists quitted the scene of action ere it was apparent whether stagnation or progression might be the happy condition of civilisation; and as for the Bonapartists, neither the sceptre of Cæsar nor the crown of Charlemagne quite settled the pictorial style of the future.

To determine with any precision the culminating period of French art is by no means easy. Each decade suffers losses which may overbalance the gains, and few governments fall before they have

inflicted injuries which go far to obliterate benefits. On the whole, we incline to think the reign of the Orleanists to have been the most favourable to literature and art. A constitutional government reconciles law with liberty, stimulates action and progression, yet restrains violence and excess: its forces are gathered from the educated classes; its foundations rest on the upper social strata, secure against the surging multitude below. A political constitution thus fixed in principle, yet capable of adaptation and expansion, answers to academic rule, is in reciprocity with well-ordered minds, and fosters the best products of the intellect and the imagination. And France for eighteen years, willing to renounce military glory, to forgo the indulgence of political agitation, and reaping the rewards of tranquillity and peace, enjoyed something approaching an Augustan age of literature and art. Guizot and Thiers were historians as well as statesmen; and painters such as Delaroche, Ary Scheffer, and Flandrin, nourished their art by converse with works of the highest mental calibre.

Among the many exhibitions which have given us from time to time the opportunity of gauging the ebb and flow of the national art, that which to our mind registered the flood-tide was the Exposition Universelle of 1855. The date only, not the glory, belonged to the Second Empire; the harvest, in fact, had been reared under the Orleanists. Indeed, right-minded abhorrence of Imperialism, with its *coup d'état*, alienated amongst others Ary Scheffer and Delaroche. Still, neither before nor since has French art put forth such creative power, versatility of invention, and mastery in *technique*. Never to be forgotten were

two spacious rooms occupied exclusively by the giant canvases of Horace Vernet and Ingres: "The Battle of Smala" by the one, and "Homer Deified" by the other, could be produced in no country save France. Also among masterworks which stand as landmarks in this bewildered century, were "The Summons of the Last Victims of the Reign of Terror," by Charles Louis Müller; "Dante and Virgil conducted across the Lake," by Eugène Delacroix; "Tintoret and his Daughter," by Leon Cogniet; "The Eve of St Sebastian," by Jules Breton; and "The Glorification of St Louis," by Alexandre Cabanel. Likewise among illustrious painters trained under Orleans rule appeared conspicuously Benouville, Bellangé, Flandrin, Frère, Gérôme, Hamon, Hébert, Landelle, Meissonier, Millet, Plassan, Robert-Fleury, and Signol. The great school of Animal Painting in modern Europe then rose to its height under Troyon, Jadin, and Rosa Bonheur. And in Landscape and Marine an epoch was marked by men no less distinguished than Corot, Français, Gudin, Heim, Huet, Isabey, and Rousseau. Painters of a later generation have done little else than squander the riches of these their forerunners. In short, French art about the close of the Orleans reign touched a happy mean: on the one hand removed from the stagnation and conventionalism of the old *régime*, and on the other placed at a safe distance from later licence and debasement.

And let it not be supposed that this art of temperance and obedience was enervate, monotonous, or slow. The contrary is proved by men collectively of widest range and utmost vigour—Horace Vernet, Delacroix, Decamps, Flandrin, Gérôme, Meissonier, and many

others. The great leader of the Romantic School, Delacroix, who won all his honours under the Orleanists, was in 1855 represented by thirty-five compositions heated in passion and colour even to excess. Decamps, a genius and a giant equally of Orleans growth, by some fifty products of his daring hand—including the story of Samson—took a historic niche near to Michael Angelo. The audacity and the diablery which ran riot on his canvas might seem the rule of his life. The French artist, like the chamois-hunter, often dies elsewhere than in his bed. Decamps, of fevered mind, rushed at nature not for repose, but for excitation. It is related how one day at Fontainebleau he mounted a fiery horse for the sake of the struggle and the danger: the horse plunged into the forest, and the painter's head was dashed against a tree; in three hours he died in fearful agony. Such accidents cannot be identified with dynasties, but they come as signs of the turbulent spirit of a people long tortured by revolution. Year by year annual Salons show that the overwrought art of the nation surrenders thought to thrilling situation and sensation.

The Orleanist rule belongs to a comparatively distant time: its living personalities have passed away; the principles it represents alone abide. The Napoleonic reign is comparatively recent, and artists then trained survive. Yet successive Empires rank rather among physical and organic than with intellectual and artistic phenomena. The first Napoleon subverted the face of Europe geographically, and art he used as religion to prop up and to adorn the Empire. Napoleon III., by confession, trod circumspectly in the footprints of his great uncle. The arts were car-

essed, they received a Judas kiss, they served as pageants or for dazzling paraphernalia in the palace. A devotion thus hollow brought forth fruit equally rotten: the man of intellect was fettered, the artist bribed or intimidated; Imperialism forbade the writing of any book or the painting of any picture that might give promise of a condition more blissful than that of the Second Empire. The *coup d'état*, by its brute violence, paralysed the best minds. The dismay and disgust of honest men and of refined artists are depicted in the 'Life of Ary Scheffer' as follows:—

"I called," writes Mrs Grote, "at Scheffer's residence within a day or two of the terrible slaughter of the Parisians in their houses and in their streets—that is, as soon as it was prudent to venture forth. I found Scheffer at home, and alone with his wife. The interview was at once solemn and sad. The collective ruins of thirty years' illusory hopes and struggles stood before me, as it were; whilst in the few broken phrases which Scheffer's emotions permitted him to utter, was the anguish of final despair. Shortly after this visit, I repaired to the *atelier*. Scheffer at first seemed so full of mortifying thoughts as to be incapable of talking; he looked haggard and dejected, whilst his voice, when he did let fall a few sentences, was veiled by grief-stricken, subdued tones. A paper was produced, wherein was given a long list of persons newly arrested, of whose probable destination nothing could be learned. The reading of this document aroused Scheffer's ire beyond control: his eyes seemed to flash fire; he paced the *atelier* with wavering steps, giving vent at intervals to his feelings by emphatic exclamations inspired by his honest, just wrath. The scene was one not to be forgotten."

Mrs Grote proceeds to testify, as "a sympathising witness," to the mental anguish of noble, patriotic, and pure-minded Frenchmen, who,

"figuratively speaking, died of their wounds."

Artists by innate sympathy incline to justice, liberty, and truth; art by its very being clings to what is noble in thought and generous in humanity. Therefore nothing can be more fatal than a sovereign rule of selfishness, than the iron hand of tyranny wearing a perjured glove, than might which sets at naught right. The artist suffers no severer cruelty than to be stripped of his ideal; inevitably he sinks to lower standards, and bends to forces against which his better nature would rebel. The artist is not born the hermit or the martyr: he loves society, and is not insensible to pleasure; his aspirations, indeed, usually yield under temptation. Seldom does the painter disclaim to flatter the ruling monarch; a Court of imperial splendour has insidious means of bribery and corruption, against which genius itself is not always proof. And so, under the Second Empire, the artist, as plastic clay, received the impress of his surroundings. It was a period of adventure and of speculation, of luxury and allurements: the painter,—as, for example, M. Baudry in the new Opera House,—had to pitch his colour to the gilding; the forms were flaunting as the sentiments were false. And there being no faith and little virtue to stand by, art, in the words of Mr Matthew Arnold, was surrendered like the people to "the Goddess of Lubricity." The Empire, in short, stands responsible for empty show, frivolity, and corruption, and much that is worst in the art of the present must be laid at its door.

Neither did the fortunes which befell the Empire prove pre-eminently inspiring to the artist. Its opening act, the *coup d'état*, could not be accounted among the hap-

piest motives for canvas. Louis Napoleon was gaily dancing a waltz while the statesmen of France were undergoing arrest—an incident which might furnish a companion picture to the trite composition, Nero fiddling while Rome was in flames! It is not often that a national tragedy is so nicely arranged for comic uses! The foreign wars, with the exception of that in the Crimea, furnished inglorious topics for either the historian's pen or the painter's pencil. The early adventure at Boulogne, tame eagle in hand, the emblem of empire, reads as a farce. The war in Italy, waged for an "idea," closed in an anti-climax. The annexation of Savoy and the expedition to Civita Vecchia were alike inglorious; and the Mexican scheme, with the murder of Maximilian, proved the saddest of disasters. And so the Empire could offer the artist no more inspiring theme than the well-meant meeting of the Emperor, Empress, Queen Victoria, and Prince Albert, at Cherbourg. Finally came the German war; and Meissonier, it is said, was commissioned to paint the victories: but, contrary to these sanguine expectations, the victories served to enrich only German picture-galleries. Battle-pieces, formerly staple commodities in Paris, are now, for obvious reasons, at a discount. The storm which wrecked the Empire, clouded the nation's art.

The Empire, in short, poisoned the springs of art, from the fountainhead downwards. Truth was fouled, beauty made the pander of passion; art, denied honourable service, sank to the senses. Thus the Salons became more and more notorious for nude women, gay pictures of society, courtesans, and men about town smoking, carousing, and love-making. The con-

ception, or thought, went for nothing; seriousness gave place to superficial cleverness; man was little else than the bearer of glittering orders, and women but a mass of flesh hung with silk and spangled with diamonds! Such art speaks of something more deadly than a defeated dynasty; the cancer was deep-seated, and it festers still. So it had been in Venice: her art was safe only while the State was sound; Bellini, Carpaccio, Cima Conegliano, and Palma Vecchio were simple, serious, and severe; but with advancing luxury, corruption came and the arts fell. France points a like moral.

The museums and picture-galleries of France present confused accumulations which may be compared to the broken and upturned strata on the earth's surface. These art-deposits consist, as it were, of a medley of primary, secondary, and tertiary formations. The first is classic, or some of its many derivatives; the second romantic; and the last naturalistic. But these historic remains seldom follow in strict chronologic sequence; neither do they repose on a horizontal level. Like the crust of the earth, they display sudden breaks and violent upheavings. Thus the underlying formations are sometimes thrown uppermost; and so, in the midst of recent alluvial deposits intrude primary structures and prehistoric forms. The world of art, we repeat, has, like the physical globe, suffered catastrophe. "After me the deluge," were the words of king and statesman, the supposed champions of nature's law and order; and when the arts might seem for a moment safely anchored in sheltered haven, the ark is cast adrift from her moorings. When the compass was lost, men were driven to strange devices; thrown

to the mercy of the elements, they had recourse to primitive expedients, and the rudest of arts fitted best the extremity of the occasion. In these latter days much of the originality we are taught to admire is little else than the last resource of artists driven to their wits' end. And that piecing together and patching of parts into a whole, dignified by the term eclecticism, is as clumsy tinkering, or as the rigging up of an old boat from wreckage scattered on the beach. For France the conclusion is, that the symmetry and beauty of a first creation have been marred; the arts are no longer homogeneous formations, but as piecemeal conglomerates known to geologists as pudding-stones, or like to the strange image with head of gold, legs of iron, and feet of clay! Historic styles lie huddled together like erratic boulders in the midst of green valleys. A Greek goddess, a medieval saint, a common labourer, after communistic fashion, meet as Beauty and the Beast. Illicit intercourse begets monsters; hence mongrel schools which nature and true art abhor. Conspicuously, architecture in France has suffered miscarriage; the streets of Paris bear the worst traits of hybrids. The growth of art, Goethe taught, was like a growth in nature: art, as nature, jealously guards her types; and when the chain of development is broken, disorganisation follows as now.

Democracy has been a chief cause of the disintegration of French art. The power is not new; it is older than Imperialism: it is at present on its third trial, and from first to last its aspects and effects prove all but identical. The higher and the educated classes, as is too well known, are outnumbered and ousted by majorities, of which the largest component parts are neces-

sarily of the lower orders. And the naturalism which holds possession of picture-galleries is but a sequence of that levelling downwards which has been going on within the body politic. Hated aristocrats hiding their heads and seeking safety in seclusion, rich robes retreat from pictures in favour of rags. The "sans-culottism" of revolution, remembered as a by-word, finds revival; and peasants and paviors, though on canvas permitted to wear breeches, are usually but scantily provided therewith, and holes and tatters appropriately give glimpses of nature in this emphatically naturalistic art. To recur to a previous comparison, signs are visible on all sides of what geologists term a catastrophe: the ordered succession of the earth's strata is turned topsy-turvy; and when the tempest is spent, in place of green fields is discovered an alluvial deposit commonly known as dirt! Thus the relation between art and politics is not quite so poetic as Mr William Morris has recently pictured at Oxford. At all events, in Paris the democratic scum of the streets finds its equivalent in dirt upon canvas!

As far back as 1849, we remember the foretaste with which Paris was favoured of this democracy in art. The palace of the Tuileries, which the Commune in 1871 succeeded in reducing to a ruin, and of which the Republic in the past summer razed the last stone, was in that year devoted to the uses of the Salon. The flight of the King had been so sudden that the palace was not dismantled; and dirty citizens, holding with M. Louis Blanc the communistic idea of sharing all things in common, might be seen mounting the stately stairs, treading with roughest boots the velvet carpets, rolling and rollicking among marble statues in rooms

shining with mirrors and glittering in gold. A free Republic appropriately granted to the crowd the boon of freest entry; not a sou was taken at the door; and the enfranchised mob, sweltering from slums, exemplified their innate love of art by picking pockets!

The Salon of 1849 showed democracy under probation; that of 1883 presented democracy under promotion: the spectators in the one were raised to the *dramatis personæ* in the other; the ragged rascals figured in gold frames upon the walls. The wheel of fortune in its gyrations had thrown the monarch to the bottom, while the beggar rode at the top. Signs are patent on all sides that artists have reversed their studies and hunted out fresh models; they change their practice with the period, and instead of dancing attendance on a regal Court, they track out the blacksmith at his anvil and the peasant at his plough. The painter brings down his standard as the political suffrage is lowered; he casts his academic principles into the ballot-box. Yet democracy, though always fixed to the laws of its being, repeats itself with a difference; accordingly, the manifestations under the first Revolution contrast curiously with the art springing up under the extant Republic. For example, as a substitute for the printer's wife who, in 1793, was crowned in Nôtre Dame as the "Goddess of Reason," recent Salons have glorified a woman washing, a woman hanging out clothes, a woman throwing potatoes into a sack, a girl tossing off a *petit verre d'absinthe*, and a girl serving at "*un bar aux Folies-Bergères*"!

Naturalism, though of comparatively recent growth in France, is nothing new in the history of art. Italy, from Masaccio to Cara-

vaggio, and Germany and the Low Countries over a period of three centuries, were strong in *naturalisti*; and the condition of things, either in old or modern days, conducing to naturalistic revivals, is usually the same. When art has fallen into a weak and moribund state, a time for reaction comes round, and life is renewed by fresh access to nature; and in our age art tends all the more to realism from the rapid strides made by physical science. Art grows more material through the conquests made by sense at the cost of the imagination. The movement has spread among all nations. Thus France in art is not in isolation: she makes herself obnoxious only through excess; she has overstepped the happy mean which nature loves: the law of natural selection she has reversed; hence naturalistic art has become for France a development downwards.

Ignoble naturalism has of necessity brought degradation on religious art. The practice of the best times had been to raise sacred characters into the region of the abstract and the ideal, to bring into play presences and powers which convey a sense of the supernatural. But nowadays saints are painted from sinners, sheep are herded with goats, the strait and narrow way is a broad market-place, and supernatural agencies are deemed to belong only to the region of superstition. Rationalism and naturalism commonly go hand in hand, and Christian art cannot consort with such companionship. M. Renan severs Christ from the Godhead; robs religion of its miracles; kills the sacred dove, the symbol of the divine presence in the Church; and artists, under democratic and rationalistic sway, paint down to this nihilistic level. We remember

eight years ago, in the Salon, a notable "Crucifixion," which deservedly provoked a storm of criticism. The painter, no less a man than M. Bonnat, gloated over the tortured muscles like an anatomist, and plied his pencil as a dissecting-knife. With barbaric realism and gladiatorial furor, he depicted sinews throbbing and limbs writhing under agony. The demonstration was purely physical and organic; spiritual and supernatural powers were wholly excluded: not even Caravaggio or Spagnuolotto, the coarsest of Neapolitan *naturalisti*, touched so low a depth. Clothed equally in rude repulsive realism, appeared in last Salon "*La Martyre de Jésus de Nazareth*," by M. Morot, a painter distinguished as the holder of *le Prix de Rome* and of a *grand medaille d'honneur*. The title itself is significant of the levelling going on under democracy and humanitarianism. In place of the sacrifice of the Son of God, is the mere martyrdom of a man! The figure is that of an athlete; and instead of resignation to the divine will, is the attitude of defiance. In the same Salon, still more repulsive and brutal were M. Brunet's "*Gibets du Golgotha*." The sacred theme here again is treated as a profane drama; the sentiment of religion is polluted by passion; the gross materials which surge to the surface at the centres of political action are thrown coarsely on canvas. The whole product is of the earth, earthy. In the religious art of Italy the handling was refined and delicate as the sentiment, the colours were unsullied as the rainbow: here, on the contrary, the work is worthy of a bricklayer; the pigments are laid on with a trowel; the colours might be taken from the mud of the streets. Lost to all sense of religion is the religious art of France: like the social and

political State, it is without cohesion; it is ready to fall to pieces; it is as a house divided against itself, as a Church distracted by diverse winds of doctrine; it takes its inspiration not from the tongues of Pentecost, but from voices at the Tower of Babel.

Our neighbours across the Channel may count it an insult if we class Gustave Doré among religious painters; and yet the so-called "Triumph of Christianity," as a piece of impertinence, can hardly be overlooked when counting up the sins which pander to popularity. The characters pressed into the sacred service comprise Christ, Angelic Spirits, Christian Attributes, Ministering Angels, Gabriel, Michael, Hecate, Thor, Venus, Cupid, Jupiter, Juno, Jupiter's Eagle, Phœbus conducting the chariot of the sun, the bull Apis, and the bird Ibis! This gorgeous display is got up as a Christmas extravaganza; the scenic effects would gain the applause of the gallery in a third-rate theatre. Gustave Doré gloried in the vices of the meretricious decadence; his facile effrontery entitled him to borrow Luca Giordano's nickname "*Fa Presto*"; his pious pictures deserve to be hung on a line with Guercino's famous head in the Bologna Gallery—"God the Father," a grand impromptu painting done in a single night and put up in the morning! Such scandals argue a people lost to taste and to propriety.

Naturalistic art in France covers so large an area, and has developed such varied phases, that to state the case concisely is by no means easy. We made acquaintance with three pioneers of the movement—Jules Breton, Jean Millet, and Gustave Courbet—in the Exposition Universelle of 1855; and their followers or paro-

dist, Sebastian Lepage, Lhermitte, Gustave Laugée, D. F. Laugée, J. Dupré, J. Aublet, A. Roll, H. Lerolle, E. Manet, and J. Beraud, have in recent Salons and in the Exposition Nationale of last autumn exemplified the present aspects of the school. The men of the former generation were moved by a first love,—nature was to them a presence and a power, and their transcripts appeal to deep and universal sympathies. And if Breton and Millet rank among *genre* painters, they descended on the lower walk from a higher sphere; the one was a pupil of Drolling, who learnt classicism in the *atelier* of David—the other had been trained in the historic school of Delaroche. Such ennobling antecedents, we cannot but think, environed their naturalism with dignity; eternal principles preside over the accidents of time and place; pastoral life, true to its first estate of innocence and obedience, does not appear as on the naturalistic canvases of to-day, in democratic disorder or as plebeian dregs. When first we came across Breton's comparatively early compositions, "The Blessing of the Harvest" and "The Planting of the Crucifix," we felt that the man had a distinctive vocation. Unlike his degenerate successors, he honours humanity and exalts honest toil. He is not one of those who love ugliness for its own sake; he does not prefer rags to decent cleanly attire, nor the dark dens of vice to the pure air and bright sunshine of the fields. Like Crabbe, Burns, and Wordsworth, he frames poetry out of simple and even bald materials: his pictures are idyls, his peasants teach "how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong." Millet, with his life-story set in the key of his art, speaks the same peasant dialect; yet his accents in

"The Angelus" are deeper, his forms and motives have a grandeur which won as his appellation, "The Michael Angelo of peasant life." What a contrast to the debased naturalism which now gains the suffrage of the people!

The art of such men as Breton and Millet teaches the harmony of existence between meadows, woods, and those that dwell therein. In such pictures the tenants and the tillers of the soil are as the aspects of nature: their physiognomies are fortified by the cool air they breathe and the clear streams which quench their thirst, their roughened hands are as the weather-beaten rocks, and even the coats that shelter their backs have texture and colour in common with the herbage of the meadow and the lichen on the tree! Such painters, among whom must be numbered L. Lhermitte in "*La paie des Moissonneurs*," think worthily of nature—they do but add to nature the "art that nature makes." Immeasurable indeed is the distance between painters who might have sketched in Arcadia or in Eden, and the artists who under pretence of naturalism wallow in the mire.

The best art is short-lived: the worst art survives; the evil which men do lives after them. So has it been with the gross-minded Gustave Courbet,—a leader of the extreme party alike in politics as in painting. Artists, as a rule, are the most mistaken of politicians: they lack judgment and discretion; they are carried away by impossible aspirations; they build castles in the air, and lay their foundations in the sand. Courbet, it is well known, made himself notorious as a ringleader among the Communists, and Nemesis rewarded his great achievement—the overthrow of the Ven-

dôme Column. His art had long been prophetic of his end. Democratic disorder, as we have said, took possession of his canvas; his pictures were sludgy and ill-conditioned as the mob whose tool he was. The tranquil ways of nature found no place in his turbulent mind; his streams roared, his seas beat madly on the shore, his trees were torn by tempests, and rank weeds choked the lily of the field. Such is the common nature which springs from Communism! When a foul man is found to produce fine art, then may we expect to gather figs of thistles! Mr Hamerton twenty years ago did good service when he denounced Courbet, and refuted the mendacious "idea which ingenious French critics contrived to attach to the word realism." "That idea," writes Mr Hamerton, "is the wilful preference of ugliness to beauty. Truth herself, to whose majesty all great men are loyal, has become degraded in the popular French mind by the unfounded notion that these ugly pictures of Courbet are truer and more realistic than the beautiful ones of better men. His works are therefore a definite injury to the noble cause of truth, because they make it understood that truth is of necessity disgusting."

"A passion-flower," we have been pleased to hear, on the authority of Ouida, "is just as realistic as a potato;" and we venture to add, that Christopher North in his shooting-jacket is quite as naturalistic as any red republican! But these and like truisms are manifestly behind the present progressive period. Unluckily, the art which took the pink of its perfection from the tone of good society pertains to the aristocratic régime which is melting away; the summits in the social system are levelled; and so the artist, inspired by

the occasion, realises the "potato," and depicts life below-stairs. His models lie in out-of-the-way places,—his geniuses reside in garrets, his honest citizens in cellars; and so far removed are his pictures from a palace, that the situation might be mistaken for a pigsty! Parisian *ateliers* have transmogrified their properties. The crowns of kings, the robes of senators, are cast aside as worthless lumber; in lieu, the walls receive for decoration the ragged breeches of the peasant and the rude tools of the tinker. The destiny of art lies in progressive humanity; but this "school of the back kitchen" studies not the brain, but the rump of humanity!

Sacred characters, it might be thought, would be saved from degradation; yet a man no less distinguished than M. Bonnat sinks Job to the low condition of a mendicant. The patriarch who is supposed above all others to rise to dramatic sublimity, is cast ignominiously on the ground, in absolute nudity, ready to perish of hunger, cold, and extreme old age; the bare *torso* is as a weather-beaten trunk stripped of its bark; the legs and the arms might be the withered extremities of a leper! Equally culpable for the misapplication of talent and skill on the meanest of objects, is Bastien Le-page: his masterly realism, as before indicated, is with unparalleled perversity dedicated not to "passion-flowers," but to "potatoes." "The season of October" is in fact a potato-field: a fright of a girl—a choice specimen of the poetry of the unpleasing—is intent on emptying a basket of potatoes into a sack. Another distressing parody on pastoral charms by the same hand is "The Hay Harvest." A lout lies stretched in a meadow full length on his back, and a straw hat serves as a complete ex-

tinguisher to the face, possibly on the principle exemplified by the Greeks, that when a thing is too awful to be seen, it ought to be veiled. Of course nothing short of life-size could do justice to the magnitude of the conception! Another thoroughly congenial theme is "The Beggar"—a thief in disguise. Nothing that could enhance disgust has been overlooked: the ragged rascal is innocent of soap; his clothes fester with pestilence. Such is the object on which Bastien Le-page squanders consummate art: light, shade, colour, handling, in justest relations, play up to the hero skulking away with stolen viands in his pocket!

A grossly naturalistic art is comparatively easy, therefore the aspirants are many. Mechanics succeed best in a mode essentially mechanical: men whose intellects are little else than the sense of eyesight, are more deft in realism than minds dilating under reason or distracted by imagination. And the artist who trusts solely to his senses will always carry with him the majority of mankind. Hence the popularity gained by materialistic painters: they paint, as before said, down to the million. It needs little study, and no reading, to perfect or to appreciate a class of works unfortunately greatly on the increase, such as D. Laugée's "Washing Day," or Marie Petiet's "Ironing Day," or M. Aublet's half-stripped soldiers soaping and swilling off the dirt in the big tank of a *caserne*. The success of the last was greatly due to the realistic rendering of the lathery soap-suds, clinging glutinously on the faces, necks, arms, and hands of these foul defenders of their country's honour! A primary principle in this school is, that the lower the object the higher must be the illusive realism; hence the head of a peasant is less worthy

than his *sabots*. Thus in the plebeian pastoral, perfect after its kind, A. Perret's "Daughter of the Fields," in last Salon, the eye is arrested by the literal and illusive portraiture of the muddy wooden shoes; and though the thought to be expressed is of microscopic dimensions, the whole is on the utmost scale of nature, as befitting a supremely naturalistic school. Why not paint the pastoral and poetic pump life-size? A like honour has been already conferred on the democratic broomstick!

Of all the crazes in the crazy world of art, that of the so-called "Impressionists" is the most senseless. Never has the oft-recurring reaction against academic teaching and historic precedent proved so wilful and wild; never did the quest for novelty or strange sensation lead men into paths so divergent from sober truth and right reason. Yet to be serious is out of the question in presence of the absurd abortions known in Paris, and seen not long ago in New Bond Street. 'Punch' did good service in turning the *raison d'être* of this dire nonsense into ridicule; and the caricatures provoked hardly more laughter than the originals. The works are beneath notice except as badges of one of the many parties who now run riot in Paris.

The name borne by this insignificant clique is an imposition. The term "Impressionist" might be accepted in a good sense: the painter, indeed, can deal with nothing else than impressions; he cannot transfer the external world bodily to canvas—the utmost he can do is to transcribe the image printed on the senses. Art is not nature as she is, but only as she seems. Yet the impressions produced on the eye, and through the eye upon the mind, we need hardly say, are of divers qualities and

values. The poet's eye is sensitive to beauty; the philosopher's eye discovers hidden meanings; the eye of the naturalist, though it coldly "botanise on a mother's grave," gathers truth. But the vision of the "Impressionist," to what shall it be likened? It has been aptly compared to the instantaneous impress left on the eye in the act of winking the eyelid! What value would Da Vinci or Michael Angelo have attached to this impressional art? Or of what worth to any one can be the impression of a second of time, made by jockeys, dancers, or acrobats—the select class to which the choice tastes of these very impressible painters incline? M. Degas, the chief of the school, finds among the *corps du ballet* congenial stuff for his distinguished ability; and he and his brethren discovering a calling in the service of ugliness, select for their loving pencils repulsive girls in the third rank of the theatrical world. A picture with charms peculiar to this clique is timed at the moment when the falling stage-curtain is within a few inches of the ground; thus the entire composition consists of nothing more or less than some half-dozen ill-fashioned heels, toes, and ankles! The art is on a par with the idea. The same eccentric craftsman in "*Le Départ Jockeys*," with like conceit cuts into slices a racehorse: a lanky straight pole, as graceless as a bean-stalk, divides the composition in twain, and half the horse appears on either side. M. Renoir shares with M. Degas the beauties of the ballet; "the fleshly school" gives place to unseductive skin and bone! Again the art treatment does justice to the raw material! M. Manet succeeds to admiration in depicting a girl and a child of bewitching ugliness; the modest price is £400—indeed the entire

Bond Street show might have been secured as a bargain for little over £6000! But no one jumped at the prize; and in Paris one sale in a season is accepted as a bright omen for the future. It is known that a certain Parisian dealer, with an enthusiasm uncommon to his craft, supplies the ready cash; and his shop shows hundreds, nay thousands, of canvases three or four deep piled against the walls. But the good time, we are assured, is certainly coming, when all will be eagerly bought up at a premium. In the meanwhile the ill-requited "Impressionists" are in precarious estate. But the threadbare Republic raises a large loan; funds are wanted to feed the social system; the friends of liberty cannot starve; fraternity must be housed and clothed—and among many claimants, surely outcast "Impressionists" are not the least deserving of subsidy.

Two national monuments raised during the past year by two hostile peoples are characteristic of their several political conditions. The one at Niederwald overlooking the Rhine, and commemorating the union of Germany, was solemnly inaugurated by the Emperor. The other, a mean but colossal statue of the French Republic, was, with the usual noise and tumult, put up in the Place de la Republic in Paris. No words can picture the vileness of the art; ignorance and impudence realise the worst traits of democratic rule. And wherefore does France, proud of gifted sculptors, suffer this humiliation? Simply because republics, through innate predilection, patronise base art. Paris has proved this to her cost; this monument is not the first of its kind. A hideous colossal statue of Liberty in painted clay, appropriately close to the guillotine, in 1793 stood in the

centre of La Place de la Concorde, then La Place de la Révolution. Here Louis XVI. was beheaded, and the maddened crowd rushed forward to dip their hands, pikes, and handkerchiefs in the blood! Here, also, Madame Roland suffered; and pointing to the frightful statue of Liberty, her dying words were, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" One consolation is, that monuments raised to republics are seldom more stable than the powers which gave them birth.

Victor Hugo some fifteen years ago had a prophetic vision: in the twentieth century he foretold the growth of a marvellous nation; this nation will have for its capital Paris; it will not be called France, but Europe; and in succeeding centuries, still more transfigured, it will bear the name of Humanity! Victor Hugo has since fraternised with the poet Swinburne, and jubilant utterances proclaim the approaching millennium. Yet, unhappily the arts are still militant; the battle in the streets may for the moment cease, but "the battle of the styles" is as fierce as before. And though Paris remains the capital of France, the prophecy that France will swallow Europe is just at present accomplished in her political isolation. Kings and emperors meet around her territory, make friendships, and join hands against a common danger. As to the world of art, the watch which Germany keeps on the Rhine cuts off copartnership between Paris and the schools centred at Berlin, Munich, and Vienna. And equally on the southern frontier is free interchange intercepted. The Pyrenees, which some years since were said to be already levelled, happily remain as protecting barriers; Madrid in policy and thought is nearer to Berlin,

Vienna, and Rome, than to Paris, and the academic and regal art recently restored to Spain rises in reproving protest against the low-bred issue of democracy. Victor Hugo's fine picture of humanity, the universe, and the twentieth century, does not compose with the hard facts and the prosaic details thrust by the Republic into the foreground. Fustian art and tinsel literature excite disgust and provoke reaction, and already the voice of Europe is unanimous against these vagaries of Gallic genius.

The indictment against majorities and democracies has issues beyond Gallic frontiers; the lower orders throughout Europe are using means both legitimate and illegitimate to obtain power, and the surging masses play conspicuous parts on canvas as preliminary to their approaching political career! Democracy in art has made itself conspicuous in every capital; at St Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, and London, though emperors and kings still impede progress, the rough coat, the wooden shoe, the weather-beaten visage, the labour-hardened hand of peasant and artisan, assert their native rights in picture-galleries. And it is fortunate for the painter that it often happens that the grosser the material, the more picturesque the effect. But the aggregate result is, that high art degenerates into low art, that history descends into *genre*, that poetry sinks into plainest prose. And it might seem too sanguine to hope that the lowest depth in politics or in art has yet been touched. When we see how democracy daily preaches doctrines of anarchy, and develops misdeeds to which history shows no parallel—when we learn how socialists are eager for plunder, and how Fenians attempt to annihilate whatever has

more honour than themselves,—we may anticipate for democracy in art a distinguished future!

And significant signs on political and artistic horizons prognosticate democratic storms on the British shores. The utterances of statesmen, popular preachers, and social reformers are prophetic. Sir Charles Dilke in December last, opening his mind to pupils and parents at Hammersmith, confessed—it is said, with a blush on his face!—that his sympathies were rather with art than with science, because he maintained that art was essentially more democratic. And Mr John Bright, in like spirit, addressing a Mechanics' Institute, drew a glowing picture of the House of Commons when enlightened by the free vote of the farm-labourer! Here is a promising democratic composition as companion to Copley's essentially aristocratic picture "The Death of Chatham in the House of Lords"! Furthermore, Mr Stopford Brooke—a connoisseur, an art collector, and an art critic, as well as a popular preacher—has recently been romancing with political economy: he denounces rich landlords as little better than thieves, claims for the poor shares in our common inheritance the earth, and reverses the extant industrial system by substituting for competition co-operation and State aid! The notorious Mr George, still more outspoken, preaches confiscation without compensation. And Mr William Morris—poet, artist, and workman—lecturing at Oxford upon art, announced: "I stand before you as a member of a socialistic propaganda." He inveighed against "the stupidity of the present state of society," and denounced capitalists and competitive commerce as fatal to art. The lecture ended, Mr Ruskin, as father of the movement, appropriately ex-

pressed approval of the teachings of "his old and dear friend." Thus divers authorities foretell that in England, as in France, the arts will find new birth under socialism, communism, and other forms and forces of democratic rule.

But what are the reasons for the promised revival of art under such political and social revolution? Mr Ruskin surely, after many years, has little to show except brilliant eloquence and generous expenditure. And as for Mr William Morris, his success as art manufacturer indicates that his genius accommodates itself sufficiently well to "the stupidity of the present state of society." Indeed, as a matter of fact, his paper-hangings, tapestries, and carpets meet the requirements not of democracies, but of aristocracies. And unfortunately his social and art theories are contradicted by historic experiences. The world's great epochs in art have been identified with crowned heads and glittering courts, with gilded palaces and noble and wealthy families. And as for the greatest artists of the best periods, they found their reward in the loving service of their art; and so far from reaping the abundant harvest of competitive profits, they died as they lived—in comparative poverty.

Mr Morris, in his honourable calling of art-industry, unconsciously refutes the communistic system which, he boasts, would abolish "poverty as well as riches, squalor as well as luxury." We know from personal inspection of the Oxford Street shop that the goods on sale are suited only to a state of riches and luxury; we find, moreover, that the choicest designs are identified in the history of art with monarchies and oligarchies. In short, appeal is made to the aristocratic tastes of cultured and high-born Englishmen. The style is out of keeping

with republican simplicity and socialist equality. The price, too, might not be quite convenient to communistic pockets. For example, we remember a small rug for which was asked ten guineas; also another, larger in scale, ornate in design, and gorgeous in colour, which mounted up to the aristocratic figure of 100 guineas! Such luxurious products simply belie socialistic principles. This sumptuous art, indeed, will be wholly without a market when landed and cotton lords are relieved of their possessions, or when palaces are apportioned into lodgings to receive the honest artisan. France, as we have seen, must be taken as a warning. Louis Blanc, it may be remembered, in 1848 started communistic workshops, and only the shortness of the experiment saved the national finances from ruin. The State bankrupt, the Church spoiled, noble families impoverished, the educated classes outvoted by ignorant majorities—these, indeed, were democratic conditions which might more than satisfy Paul Bert in France or Frederick Harrison in England. But one thing is certain: whatever else might prosper, at least the Fine Arts would perish.

The preceding narrative may lead to the analysis of the varied and complex aspects presented by French Art. The aggregate result is just about what might be looked for: unity and continuity being wholly dislocated in the body politic, no one school, style, or historic period reigns over the kingdom of art. On the contrary, all parties fight for, and for a time gain, ascendancy. And as in the streets every political flag has won inconstant victory, so each banner in succession waves over academies and schools. In the olden times, the lines of demarcation between conflicting parties were more rigidly defined. Re-

ligious art stood aloof from profane life; ideal styles came not in contact with common nature. Whatever might be the disorders in the State, a certain unity was preserved through the Church. But in modern France all bonds are torn asunder, faith is undermined, authority shaken, and society itself threatened with dissolution. The arts inevitably suffer accordingly: they are distracted by divers winds of doctrine—they are as a house divided against itself. The last state of such art is worse than the first.

And it may be further observed, that while political parties and phases are overturned and pass away, the impress made upon the arts remains; for it proves more easy to change a political coat, or to obliterate the inscription or monogram of a dynasty, than to sweep away the footprints of art. An artist, though of a cosmopolitan constitution which can take root in varied soils, needs many seasons for maturing; and when at last thoroughly trained, he cannot, at the bidding of a monarch or of a republic, transmute his species or alter his fruit. A painter or a sculptor of mark does not climb to his meridian before middle life: for a quarter of a century or more he has worked in his chosen groove; and so, if not shot down when mounting the bulwark of freedom, he usually survives as the representative of an order of things which has passed away. Thus it happens that on the same ground are found labourers serving many masters, and that at one time and on the same place overlap and intermingle divers styles. The Orleanists come in conflict with the Bonapartists, and both are jostled by the younger men of the Republic, the champions of democracy. The battle of the styles rages furiously: the old classic is wellnigh

driven from the field; the romantic has hardly nerve and muscle for the strife; and so, at least for the moment, as we have seen, a democratic naturalism gains the day.

The salvation of French art lies in the saving of the French nation. We are told how ten righteous men might have saved a city; and never have been wanting to France ten or more good painters to rescue the nation's art. The multitude are blind; they rush on folly headlong. Mr Matthew Arnold has recently reminded us of the saying of the Greek sage—"the majority are bad." We also know that while "many are called, few are chosen"; and Cardinal Newman adds the commentary, that, manipulate the text as you will, the few can never mean the many. Mr Arnold teaches that the salvation of a nation lies in the few, or, as he puts it, in the "remnant," which, first being converted and healed, shall then recover the unsound majority. And equally does the regeneration of French art devolve on a chosen few—on the elect. Plato mourns over the very small remnant of honest followers of wisdom; and they who are of these few, and have tasted how sweet and blessed a possession is wisdom, can fully realise the madness of the multitude. French art we have seen torn and tortured under revolution, and degraded by mad majorities. How, then, can we hope for recovery? Mr Arnold replies:—

"But we will not think of destruction for a State with such gifts and graces as France—a country which has had such a place in history, and to which many of us owe so much delight and good. She must recover through a powerful and profound renewal, a great inward change, brought about by 'the remnant' amongst her people. And France, with a population of thirty-five millions, who shall set bounds to the number of 'the

remnant, or to its effectualness and power of victory?"

We believe that in art a like remnant will triumph.

The deliverance of art, like the safety of the State, is in France assured by the preponderance in weight, as distinguished from the majority in number, of men who hold fast to the old traditions, who retain faith in the wisdom of their ancestors, who believe that art, literature, and science conform to constant laws. The essential principles of art for France, as for the world, are determined as the order of nature and as the functions of the mind. The *École des Beaux Arts* has never swerved from the ancient paths: the walls are hung with the master-works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian. Accordingly, the designs which, for over a century down to the present year, have gained the *Grand Prix de Rome*, prove allegiance to historic schools. And the new-fangled "Impressionists," soliciting the honour of an exposition of their works within the walls, received salutary rebuff, when M. Gérôme justly objected that it was impossible to sanction an art which outraged the teachings in the schools. The mode of study within the *École* is strictly academic; and this severe training of native talent, singular for brilliance and power, has long secured to French art supremacy throughout Europe. Thus France, even in the most disastrous days, rears artists competent to national work; thus the whole country teems with pictorial creations, churches testify to the persistent piety of the people, public buildings proclaim the patriotism which clings to historic memories, and private dwellings speak of the refined enjoyment springing from domestic arts inspired by poetry or coloured by romance.

Thank God, France is not yet rotten to the core.

The great artists of France rise to great occasions; and when, as in the decoration of the Pantheon, favourable opportunity offers, they seldom break down through lack of knowledge or of power. And even in these degenerate days, a select company of painters—Puviss de Chavannes, Cabanel, Laurens, and Maillot — can purge art of grossness, and in pure mind hold communion with St Louis and St Geneviève. And among the anachronisms which serve as alteratives for the depraved constitution of art, none is more salutary than the medievalism resuscitated by Puviss de Chavannes. A stranger enters the Pantheon, and in the legends of St Geneviève finds his mind carried back some four centuries to churches in Assisi and Florence painted by Giotto or Simoni Memmi. The escape from modernism and its blatant insolence is wholesome. Alexandre Cabanel, in the same interior, throws around sacred history another spell; he invests the patron saint of France with crown and sceptre; whatever his pencil touches is clothed in beauty: his art is poetry, his religion romance. French art is nought if not romantic. Jean Paul Laurens belongs to a more realistic school. His impressive "Deathbed of St Geneviève," the eager crowd come for benediction, ranks among the triumphs of naturalism. And yet common nature submits, as it were, to Christian baptism, and so undergoes an art regeneration. The Pantheon, once dedicated to the great men of France, is now fitly devoted to the best genius of French art. Here religion still reigns, and saves the painter from frivolity, licence, and commonness, — the crying sins of a nation which in its sorrows scorns to be serious.

The leading artists in Paris may

be compared with statesmen, advocates, and men of letters. Their minds are well trained and stored; they are ready to take in hand any topic that offers. A picture is composed, as a debate is conducted or a drama framed. The science, history, and archæology of art are at the finger-ends; the mind which conceives and the hand that executes work in accord. Altogether, it may be safely asserted that the first painters of France represent the most advanced stage in the world's art. And the number of painters and sculptors holding this position of command is so considerable, that brevity compels the omission of distinguished names. In no other country does the average talent rise so high, and at no other time have appeared so many men above mediocrity. However strongly the art may be condemned for its perversity, it cannot be despised for its incapacity. The Luxembourg Gallery, the provincial museums, and the annual Salons, notwithstanding extravagance and bad taste, display beyond compare in any other country creative power, novelty of conception, romance in motive, with facility of utterance and blandishments of hand. The art is comparable to eloquent thoughts set off by happiest rhetoric. Conspicuous among men who, in degenerate times, cherish the old traditions and rekindle expiring fires, stand prominent Hébert, Henner, Laurens, Luminais, Moreau de Tours, Merson, Motte, Puvis de Chavannes, Warez, Cabanel, and Bouguereau. All honour is due to the few,—unfortunately in all countries in a small minority,—who, despising evil report, hold that the artist's mission is to make visible such truth and beauty as dwell in this fallen world—who eschew things common and unclean, turn aside from the ignoble present into the historic

past, and seek to realise the poetic thought which gives to existence its worth and joy.

Chroniclers of art have not taken sufficiently into account phenomena which crop up under the law of reaction. Philosophers such as M. Taine find the task comparatively easy to track out the ordinary relations between causes and effects, but they have no belief in the creation of genius out of nothing; they do not reckon on the unexpected flight of thought into tangents, or on centrifugal forces acting under the law of reaction. Without this reckoning the state of art in France cannot be computed, for in no other territory on earth has this irregular energy obtained equal potency. The vitality, indeed, of the national art, in no small degree is due to the attraction between opposites—to the power of contradiction, whereby each school, just at the point of culmination, provokes its contrary. Thus the cold classic might seem to generate the passion of romance, while the poetic ideal equally provokes its complementary contrast in prosaic realism. Hence the dynamic forces brought into play do not move in right lines straight ahead, but describe circles and ellipses, or wander, as we have said, into tangents.

One advantage of these errant courses may be, that French art in its entire circuit compasses the whole firmament; the sky is thickly peopled by suns, planets, comets, meteors, which in swift succession rise from the horizon to the zenith. Each shines, and is then eclipsed. And the law of reaction—the phenomena of opposition and contrast—has never been more strikingly exemplified than by the presence of supernatural power in the midst of exact science and of rationalistic negation. Puvis de Chavannes we have already named

among startling anachronisms. And then no less anomalous is the appearance of a believing supernaturalist like M. Merson. The miraculous labour of "St Isidore" has aroused no small amazement. The composition on immense canvas—the figures life-size—realises with unfaltering faith the legendary vision. A field-labourer—St Isidore—has left his plough to fall on his knees in prayer, and an angel takes his place and guides the yoked oxen through the furrowed meadow! Another picture by the same hand, also a vision, with equal boldness grapples the supernatural: angels descend, a female saint swoons in the foreground, while Christ on the cross raises the hand of benediction! In the same category comes J. E. Delaunay, to whose vivid imagination all things are possible. Among the last of the expiring race of seers and sorcerers, he reveals mysteries, and shows how spiritual agencies "walk the earth both while we wake and while we sleep"! His "Plague in Rome" deals with the miraculous: a winged fiend strikes the doors, and as many deaths as blows come within the dwelling; pestilence-stricken victims lie scattered in the streets. It is satisfactory to know that such high art does not pave the road to starvation. M. Merson and M. Delaunay have received rewards which may well incite others to like arduous study; they won the *Prix de Rome*, wear decorations of the Legion of Honour, and their pictures sell, and find distinction in national museums. Poor Haydon had no such luck; but in France genius is not driven to suicide.

Every philosophy of art needs a little trimming and adjusting to fit accidents; and especially in France do broad generalisations require to be touched up by modifying details. We have to take

into account, as before said, that the artist is not only an effect, but in turn a cause; that a great painter, sculptor, or architect becomes a fresh centre of creation; that around him gather scholars and imitators; and that thus new and distinctive epochs are formed. And especially does the *atelier* system of tuition in Paris aid the formation of representative schools. The great artists produced by France have not failed to make their power felt. In the Gallery of the Louvre, the masterpieces of Poussin, Watteau, Lebrun, Le Sueur, Rigaud, Greuze, Robert, Gross, Girodet, Gerard, Prudhon, and others, illustrate after what fashion painters from generation to generation have played with and introduced variations on the master-motives of classic, romantic, and naturalistic art. And during the past half-century, down to the present moment, artists have arisen comparable to fresh powers in nature; they assimilate stored-up aliment, and by careful husbandry rear advanced progeny. They evoke latent forces, reanimate dormant life, and thus lead on to novel developments. Art, like nature, repeats herself, always with a difference: creation in art, as in nature, perpetually goes on; and thus artists the most eclectic live only by originating. This emphatically holds in France, the most fecund of lands.

Take as examples Cabanel and Bouguereau, men who balance with nicety eclecticism and creation. They compile beauty from the antique, passion from the romance of the Renaissance, and withal imbibe a certain spirit of religion which serves sufficiently well for Madonnas. And perhaps creation with such artists is little else than felicitous adaptation; on their canvases "the birth of Venus" is not a new birth, and yet the idea has

never been embodied with less blemish; faultless forms are collocated, incongruities eliminated. The art evolved is comparable to that of horticulture: a florist so cultivates a flower as to eradicate accidental blemishes, and to educe and perfect essential beauties. Indeed the more subtle and æsthetic phases of French art find analogies in the forced growth of the greenhouse. This art of its kind is consummate, sensitive to emotion, and melodious as music. Did space permit, it were interesting to trace the correspondence between such pictorial art and the music of Gounod. So long as men thus highly gifted appear in continuity, the country they adorn must take the lead in the finer products of civilisation.

The true greatness of a national school is best gauged by its attitude towards nature. Strictly speaking, indeed, supernaturalism in art is little else than the exaltation of the powers of nature. In this sense the natural and the supernatural are one. And if we were asked to name the speciality in which present art in France surpasses the past, we should say, it is in its mode of ennobling nature, in its elimination of mean elements, and in its selecting and magnifying of types and functions distinctive of man, the lord of creation. In no country and at no time can these hard conditions be met by the many; but France, in spite of the multitude gone astray, possesses an elect few who struggle for the goal. As bright examples stand foremost E. V. Luminais, J. P. Laurens, and Moreau de Tours. The last, we trust, may be accepted as the spokesman for young France. "The Sacrifice of Family for Country," is an appeal to patriotism, and the period and the place are sufficiently removed from the ac-

tual to admit of generic treatment,—that large comprehension of nature which comprises, as among the Greeks, an ideal within the real. M. Laurens has like motive. In "The Last Moments of the Emperor Maximilian," also in "The Pope and the Inquisitor," literal truth and historic fact make moving appeal to emotion,—the painter's mind moulds nature into art. E. Luminais, in like manner, from sternest realism evokes pathos. Grandeur tragedy was never enacted than in the scene wherein two princes, sons of Clovis II., maimed and fettered, are cast in a boat to the mercy of a stream. The picture has the solemnity, the plaintive burden, of a requiem or dirge. In such art the component elements are complex, and classification becomes difficult; the all is contained in the each, the generic enlarges the individual, the demarcations dividing schools disappear, the classic and the romantic suffuse the naturalistic, the ideal resides in the real. Such might appear the possible future of French art.

M. Gounod, with an eloquence persuasive as his music, proclaims truths which might correct the errors of the day. Individuality, independence, and liberty, he justly states, are often misunderstood. Individuality gives variety, but it wanders from the orbit, and needs to be brought back to the centre; it causes difference and division, which end in simple anarchy. Therefore the independence of the individual must submit to established law. Law maintains the unity of existence; it is the life of the reason, as it also is the reason of the life. Law is the principle of cohesion, the equilibrium of truth, the condition of real liberty; and when misunderstood or violated, then commences or is accomplished disintegration or death. "I hear,"

continues M. Gounod, "the reply after the fashion of the day, All this is the old song. Ah! beyond doubt, because it is good. Name to me one of the blessings of life which are not old; it is possible to have diversity or novelty in local or accidental conditions, but in essentials never. The laws of beauty have not changed since Phidias." Solomon writes, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done." "Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us." And King David uttered a truth old three thousand years ago—"I believe, and have therefore spoken." These words are always contemporary. Art is above all an expression; and what else shall you express but what you have believed—a conviction? This is the root of all eloquence. And what shall determine your conviction, if not enduring truth? It alone is the life of the discourse, of the science, of the art, of all things real. Fall not into the error of confounding the existence of the body with life. There are not in the whole world two ideas more unlike; mere existence is fugitive, accidental—but true life endures and tends towards the absolute. It is therefore you must be on your guard against movements febrile, turbulent, and arid, which would establish the baleful rule of sensation in place of the healthful empire of sentiment. The reign of sensation makes man *blasé*, and the decrepitude of the individual brings the decadence of a people. Gounod's words sound as timely warnings.

The problems here discussed have all the more intricacy and interest from the amazing powers and the exceptional talents brought

into play. Had France been a third-rate kingdom with an insignificant history, or if her artists were of the grade of puppets or showmen, the inquiry would be hardly worth making. But the arena is wide, the stakes are high, and the combatants number trained athletes. The French soil, as before indicated, is singularly fertile in art: her geographic position favours equally fruits of the earth and flowers of the imagination; her territory is watered by great rivers; the sun of the south fructifies the olive and the vine; on the north her children are the offspring of sea-kings, while her Mediterranean shores are peopled from Greece and ancient Italy. With these historic antecedents, with such bounties of nature for daily surroundings, it is no wonder that France gives birth to great schools of painting, sculpture, and architecture. And whatever calamities befall, vital powers preserve the people in perpetual youth; the nation suffers, but never sinks into decrepit age; the arts are blighted, but endure no lasting decay—grafted on old stocks, they burst into new life.

The phenomena presented, though lawless, admit of classification. In these latter days, styles established long ago, almost of necessity are reproduced; and for reasons before assigned, the three generic schools—the classic, the romantic, and the naturalistic—find congenial habitats on French soil. The classic is the lawful heritage of a Latin race, the romantic the legitimate offspring of a passionate and poetic people, the naturalistic the healthful product of a generous land. French artists disarm censure by charms; they allure by beauty and gladden by sprightly grace; figures on light fantastic toe convey the poetry of

motion; and as the laughing dance goes round, life is merry as the day is long. We recognise in French art the language of a people passionate, emotional, and mobile; we distinguish a race prone to imagination, and addicted to caprices of fancy; and scarcely less do we trace, in precise drawing, in absolute knowledge of the figure, and balanced proportion, intellects trained in mathematics and exact science. On the whole, it may be said that French art in its diversity ranges through and represents the entirety of the human mind; and if for a time descent be made to the senses, yet ever and anon finer chords are sounded and higher aspirations satisfied.

And equally has the survey shown close correspondence between schools of art and political dynasties and conditions. The conclusion, indeed, is more than conjectural, that Classic and Academic Arts, in repose, symmetry, and severity, hold inherent relation to the law and the order of legitimate and constitutional rule, whether under Bourbons or Orleanists; that Romantic Art, degenerating into voluptuousness and ministering to sensual appetite, inevitably pandered to the luxury and debauch of the Second Empire; and lastly, that Naturalistic Art, especially in its recent debasement, holds fellowship with the ragged and unwashed mob, with ill-conditioned majorities, with the scum and dregs of democracies. This is the naturalism which will reach its consummation with the success of the Republic in reducing society to its rudest elements!

And now we shall better understand how schools and styles the most hostile dwell contemporaneously together. No habit of thought is forsaken, no political party has

been stamped out: the Orleanist, the Republican, and the Anarchist have still courage for the fight. And art being, as we are told, "the product of external causes," and "the artist receiving the spirit and the body of his art from the energies moving around him," we may the better comprehend how art lofty and debased, how art religious and profane, serious and frivolous, finds favoured footing and indulgent home in distracted and inconstant France. In the world's history the astounding phenomena are without parallel.

In conclusion, French Art, like the commonwealth, is under disintegration; yet the dismembered body generates new birth. Perhaps "the state of Art in France" may be read in the light of a well-known metaphor concerning Truth. "Truth," writes John Milton, "came once into the world with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on. . . . But then arose a wicked race of deceivers who hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, went up and down gathering together limb by limb. We have not yet found them all." But "to be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth by truth as we find it—this is the golden rule in theology, in arithmetic," and in art. In fine, all the living elements have free growth on French soil: the arts for the moment, in common with the nation, are under disorganisation; but they cannot die—naught can "stale their infinite variety"—they but suffer ceaseless "change into something rich and strange"!

A LADY'S RIDE ACROSS SPANISH HONDURAS.—PART IV.

"ESTOY SOLTERA; VOY CON DIOS" (I am alone; I go with God).—*Spanish Axiom.*

CHAPTER IX.

THERE was the river Juan. As the true Portuguese speaks of the Tagus as "El Señor Tajo" (the Lord Tagus), so do the Hondureians, in another form of speech, accord the greatest dignity to the river Juan, although it is not, by any means, the most important stream of the country. "El hermoso! el rey de los rios de las Honduras" (the beautiful! the king of the rivers of Honduras). Mr Stephens, in his 'Central America,' alludes to this river as the "tortuous river Juan." Well, there it was,—broad, turbulent, almost defiant. I felt that this love of the Hondureians was likely to be too much for me, as, on looking across, I discerned what might be a low hurdle of rocks, standing almost in its centre, very irregular in form, and literally showing their teeth, being jagged almost to a point.

The water leapt and swirled over and about these in all directions. The very sound was a laugh aimed against us, and the solemn dark trees which bordered the side were very far from being an enlivening feature in the prospect. The sun had become overcast, and the only colour in the scene was the strip of yellow path down which we had wound, our noble selves, and the crimson handkerchiefs on the heads of two Indian women, who were squatting on the river's edge watching their naked children, who were busy making "mud pastry," much after the fashion of the small people whose dwellings are on the banks of the Lea, Trent, or Thames.

A cross macaw was evidently

secreted somewhere, whose frequent and discordant screech fell on my ear like a "jeer in the voice." "Here you are; the river is very much swollen, you'll perceive,—there is no ford,—and you will have to pass over how you can. Ya—ah!" Thus croaked the bird; and the human voice of Marcos was of still more dreary portent, as he exclaimed to his comrade, "No hay vado; y mas, no hay canoa" (no ford; and worse, no canoe). Eduardo remained silent, and walked to and fro, looking at the water as if he had a personal quarrel with everything around, and with it in particular. At length I said, "There ought to be a canoe here; where, I wonder, is the man who owns it?"

A shrug of the shoulder and a flourish was the only reply, and then Marcos solved the difficulty with the usual Hondureian platonism, "No hay remedio" (there is no remedy). The action that accompanied these words further intimated, "There is nothing for it but sink or swim: the river must be crossed, ford or no ford, and the sooner we go the better." Obviously there was no remedy; and the men turned their drawers up to their knees, folded their jackets on their heads, and prepared to walk into the water. The elder of the two Indian women now came towards me. Placing one small brown hand on the mule's neck, and almost caressing my knee with the other, as I sat humped up to keep clear of being wet, she said, "Es muy peligroso, señora, muy peligroso; no anda"

(it is very dangerous, lady; do not go).

I knew instinctively, and as well as she did, that it was very dangerous; but what could be done? and I turned to Marcos with this inquiry.

The man replied in his usual incisive and somewhat peremptory tones, "We must cross at once, Eduardo, and I will go first; he will lead the baggage-mule, and I will follow on the *macho*. When Luisa sees the *macho* well into the water, the creature will follow at once. Now stick on hard" (this being expressed as "*apargate muy fuerte*"). With this admonition he seized the hem of my dress, and began to roll it up in a rough fashion, to prevent it being immersed in the water.

The Indian interposed: "Let me do that for the lady,—you must not touch her in that manner;" and pushing Marcos aside, she arranged my garments most comfortably. Then she said, with oh! such pathos in her voice, "The river is so strong—it is very dangerous. You *will* go; but 'ay di mi,' you have much courage."

Much courage! Had she felt my throbbing pulse; could she but know, kind soul, the struggle that was going on in my proud English heart not to appear to be afraid! True, my words were measured, and I smiled because I felt I must not give way one inch; but if this were courage, it was merely the desperation of "no hay remedio," nothing more nor less.

The men, meanwhile, had driven their beasts into the water. The mules here went straight enough; and having got them safely to their work, Marcos turned round and hailed to me to follow close on. I patted the woman on the shoulder, saying as I did so, "Adieu, good friend—all will be well," and gathered up the reins to ride away.

Luisa, however, would not move and as I urged her towards the water, she trembled so violently as to shake me perceptibly as I sat. The touch of the switch and all my adjurations, sole and combined, here fell unregarded on mind and matter. Luisa would not stir, but gathered her four legs as close as she could beneath her, and stuck them in the muddy soil. The fact that this high-couraged and gentle creature continued to tremble, and appeared to be paralysed with terror, scattered all my resolution, and I turned myself half round to avoid the sight of the water.

The Indian woman now darted towards me with a cry, followed by her companion, and raising her arms in the air. "*La muleta no se va. Señora, por amor de Dios no anda!*" (The mule won't go. Lady, for the love of God remain!)"

Whatever I might have done it is impossible even to conjecture, for the mule had taken all power of action out of my governance. She still stood like a rock, looking sideways now and then at the water, and shaking with fear.

Marcos had turned round, and evidently understood the position. Coming back to within speaking distance, he shouted—"Stay where you are; Eduardo and I will get to the other side, and then return for you." So they went; and as they swayed from right to left, and in their course across described a circle, it was plainly to be seen that the current was very strong. It was a regular buffet for a while. At last we saw that the men had landed safely, and soon I espied the *macho* tied to a tree exactly opposite to where we were standing for the especial benefit of Luisa. A few shakings and a little further undressing, and then the guides came across for me.

As they neared the shore, I took

up the tremble which Luisa had at this juncture discarded; but I managed to appear calm, and to thank the Indian women for their companionship, giving them at the same time a *peseta* (English shilling) to remember me by. The elder kissed my hand; and in that glorious language in which the Emperor Charles V. is accredited to have said we should pray to God, she took her farewell—leaving me to God. “Be not afraid, dear one” (her words may be interpreted); “the good Father will take you over the river—the Father whose love will grant you many years. Go with Him. Adios.”

The love of the Father! Ah! fellow-men and fellow-women, do we not somewhat and sometimes, in our worship of the Son and in our veneration of His Mother, totally pass over the love of the Father? I repeated the Indian's words, and I am not ashamed to add that I learned a lesson from them.

The strong hand of Marcos was now on the rein, Eduardo was ordered to the off side, and the mule and her burden were dragged forwards into the stream with but scant ceremony. Soon the might of the waters fell on us, together with the swirl and the swim of the rushing current, as we neared the centre of the river. Luisa stumbles on a stone, the men prop her up lustily; but the mad racing of the current makes me blind and dizzy, for more than once we are half turned round, so I clutch the muleteer's head in answer to his injunction of *apargate bien*, and feel sure that this water is to be my last bed. However, Luisa bears up, and seems to have lost her fears—thanks to the supporters which gave the animal confidence; and this in its turn, in some magnetic force, rouses me to exertion, and I hook my knee

against the pommel of the saddle and sit as firmly as I can in obedience to the reiterated command of *apargate bien*! Luisa staggers here and there, and at one time it seemed as if we must be swept away. We had not described a large enough circle, it appeared, when passing the middle rocks. A prolonged struggle on our part, stimulated on the mule's part by a terrific bray from the *macho*. In a few moments his bosom friend, with her legitimate rider on her back, was hauled safely to land.

A gasp, and a sob, and I stood between the men, as they dismounted me. My boots were like soaked sponge; and the smell of wet leather was the pungent odour which recalled me to my clear sense. We looked across the water, to see the Indian women with their children grouped around them, looking eagerly towards us. One of them raised her arm, and pointed upwards. Then every one of them waved their hands, and turned swiftly up the path. Kind, simple people, I shall never see them again! May the love of the Father keep them ever from harm!

“We have passed a great peril, Señora,” said Eduardo, after a few moments' silence, as he made the “holy sign.” The men both bowed their heads reverently, and I think we all thanked the Lord in sincerity and truth. I, however, could not help shuddering as I looked at the river; and to get rid of the feeling, I took to walking up and down, telling the men that I was very cold. We had nothing with us, save a few *tor-tillas*, which the men ate as they rubbed the mules and arranged their furniture. Fortunately the baggage-mule had come off better than any of us. This was owing to the perfect manner in which

she had been loaded, and also from her being a very tall animal.

"You must mount quickly, for the sun will soon be down," said Marcos; "we shall scarcely have time to get to Narango."

A little delay to arrange our own toilets, and we were on the route again, the beasts and their riders being none the worse for their bath.

Marcos had soon returned to his usual equanimity, and, as usual, he "improved the occasion" to his own benefit.

"Señora," said he, as we rode along, "we both got very wet, both Eduardo and I, in the river, and you have nothing here to give us. There is very good beer in Comayagua; when we arrive there, will you give us a bottle of beer for getting you over the Juan? It is a proud thing to have forded the Juan; that is worth a large bottle of beer, Señora."

"Oh yes, yes," I replied hastily, vexed at his cupidity, and not being inclined to talk. "You shall have the beer when we get to Comayagua." It was a rash promise, for a bottle of beer in Comayagua costs four shillings!

It was some time before we could find accommodation, however humble; and it was only by taking a side path and riding into the interior that we could discover a single dwelling. At length a thatched farm-looking dwelling of the poorest description, but prettily situated on a rising knoll, came in view; and with some trepidation we inquired if we could be sheltered for the night. A pleasant-looking young woman came out, followed by some fine children and two lean dogs.

"My husband is over the mountain," she replied, in answer to our inquiries: "if the lady can put up with me and the children, we shall

be proud to receive you. Here, Vicente!"

The individual so hailed was a wonderfully handsome boy, more Spanish than Indian. Without a word he began to unload the mules, and by this act he secured the goodwill of my attendants at once.

"Come into the kitchen, lady," said my hostess; "oh, how damp your clothes are! There is a good fire there, for I have been cleaning up since the man went away."

She led the way to a building a little apart from the principal part of the house. It was only an erection of baked mud and sticks, but there was a bright wood-fire burning on one side, and a kind of oven in the centre. The woman brought out the only chair, and then knelt down to help to draw off my boots, which were really little better than pulp.

"If you will send the younger of my guides with the little *maleta* (portmanteau), I shall be very much obliged to you," I said; "and can you give me something to eat soon?"

"Yes; I will kill a fowl for you, Señora; for the men there is dried venison (my husband hunted it last year) and *tortillas*. I can let you have some light wine, if you would think it good enough."

"Thank you, but I would rather have some coffee."

"You shall have it, Señora. Now you dress here, and I will go and catch the fowl."

In a few minutes Vicente poked my portmanteau into the room, and on looking about I found a jar of water; and so, with a little management, I made a decent, and certainly a much more respectable appearance than before.

Whilst the fowl was cooking, I strolled into a kind of orchard,

where there was a round table and a seat. This, I found, Eduardo had placed for me, he knowing by this time how much I hated the usual household smells of these parts. A small kerosene lamp was brought also, for it was beginning to get dark; and when the meal appeared (the fowl stewed in rice), I ate with such a relish, that I am afraid the two lean dogs must have looked upon me at the time as a very hopeless addition to the household. I should add, however, that they *did* get the remains of this feast.

The night was fairly comfortable, and it was with a feeling of gratitude that I wished the hostess good-bye. "I would not accept any pay, Señora," the simple creature said; "but we are so poor, and we have so many children to feed."

We inquired about our way to Comayagua, and she told us that we ought to arrive there the day after at farthest. "Go to the Posada Victorine," said she; "it is a good place, and Madame Victorine will make you comfortable. Ah! she has got money, has Madame Victorine."

I was glad to hear of a comfortable, decent place, as I was anxious to remain a day or two at Comayagua, in order to refresh the whole party. Eduardo, too, was anxious to see his friends who lived there; and as he was to go on with me to San Pedro Sula, it was but natural that a day or two's halt would be especially pleasing to him. Marcos was totally indifferent on the matter.

Our march being now entirely in the lowlands, the heat had become most oppressive, and to travel in the middle of the day was a risk to health and strength. The mules, too, were showing signs

of fatigue, and grass and water were beginning to fail, and had become very inferior in quality. It was therefore imperative to get quickly into Comayagua.

It was a joyous sight, when, between rich ilex trees, we saw the walls and fluted tile roofs of the ancient capital of Spanish Honduras. The city is picturesquely built, but its silent, grass-grown streets, its air of poverty, and the absence of busy stirring life, all announce that its glory has departed. There is consequently much jealousy of Tegucigalpa, the present capital, wherein the President, Dr Soto, now dwells.

It was about noon when we wound in from some pretty country by a circular path, and arrived baked and weary at Madame Victorine's *posada*. The great heavy gates were closed, and a bell, ponderous enough for a cathedral, clanged the intelligence that strangers were waiting without. A *mozo* came out, looked at us, speedily shut the gate, and vanished.

In a few moments a plump, nice-looking woman came through the gates, her head covered with a pocket-handkerchief. "Entrez, descendez, Madame; descendez vite, je vous prie. Le dîner nous attend. Ah, ma foi, le soleil vous a mal traité! Mais entrez." So saying, she nearly pulled me off my mule, and took me through the courtyard into the house.

A younger woman was seated at a table upon which the noonday dinner was spread. She gave me kindly welcome, and told me not to talk, but to sit down and eat. "I have looked at you through the little window in the court-yard," she added, with the utmost frankness; "you are going to stay, so eat now, and take a *siesta* afterwards."

There were stewed pigeons, I

remember, and some macaroni before me, but I could not eat; I only felt a longing to lie down on the floor. The elder woman was equal to the occasion. She went to a cupboard and brought out a bottle of cognac. "That is what you want," said she in the French language; "drink of it—it is quite pure; you have been too long in the sun." So speaking, she thrust a tall, narrow glass of brandy-and-water into my hand, and stood over me like an amateur policeman till I had swallowed its contents.

"Now, eat of the pigeon; don't refuse; you will be drunk, and that would be shocking, you know," continued she, with a humorous twinkle of the eye; "shock-ing, eh, my friend?"

I laughed, for the remedy had already "fetched up" my spirits; and I found shortly that both pigeon and rice-pudding were, after my late experiences, very luxurious fare.

Some hours after we were again seated together, and then Madame Victorine informed me that she and her sister were going away to France in ten days, and that the establishment was in some confusion, because they were packing up, and preparing to make over the concern to a manager, who was to act for her for a year.

"So you are welcome to stay for a day or two; but I cannot treat you well. We are killing the old poultry and pigeons now," continued Madame, "and there are not many provisions of any kind in the house."

I hastened to assure her that one day would do; but she insisted upon my remaining two days. "Eduardo is with his friends, and Marcos is at a muleteer's *posada*. The mules are in my stable; they cannot be turned out here. Now,

come into the verandah, and we will take our coffee there," said she.

"I think," said the sister, whose name was Mathilde, "you are the lady who is going to San Pedro Sula; indeed our *mozo* learned this from your guides. Do you know the Doctor?"

"Not personally, only in the way of business," I replied. I thought I saw a look of intelligence pass between the sisters, but it was so slight that I was perhaps mistaken. Then the elder said: "You promised the men some beer, did you not, after crossing the Juan? The muleteer has been twice here asking for it, but I would not have you disturbed, and he will come this evening."

"Trust Marcos for forgetting to claim anything that will save his own pocket," I thought; and then added aloud, "Can you supply me with some, and allow me to settle with you?"

"My stores are quite exhausted, but when the man returns I will give him some of my best wine. I am the only importer of good beer in Comayagua, but your guides will be only too glad to get wine. I will see the man, and you can pay me for the wine. Do not let the muleteer purchase it; he will make you pay a fine price."

A bath and a clean bed quite restored me, and I was able to go out and look about. The fine old church is in bad preservation, and the bells, which are said to be made of silver, give forth anything but a musical sound. The edifice was, however, clean, and it contained some curious relics. On my return I found Eduardo waiting to see me.

"I thought," said Madame, "that you would like to pay your respects to the Bishop.

The palace is close by; send the *mozo* with your compliments, and inquire at what time his lordship will receive you."

Eduardo was despatched, and returned with a message to the effect that the Bishop would gladly receive me at four in the afternoon. At that hour Eduardo attended me to the palace, which was enclosed within a high wall, and entered by a plain handsome gate. This opened on a court which was surrounded by a garden. The centre part of the garden was laid out in parterres, intersected by low cane fences. These were interwoven and nearly hidden by large masses of convolvuli in luxuriant flower,—blue, striped, white, pink, and the loveliest of all, the pure white bell, with a touch of mauve colour in the depths of its corolla. These spread themselves in all directions, and a little clipping here and training there, would have been an improvement. A splendid specimen of the date-palm—a tree which seems to be honoured above its fellows in all parts—grew at each corner of the plot, and afforded plentiful shade. The court was open to the sky, and a widely paved portico ran round it: on this opened the doors of the several rooms occupied by the establishment. The roofing of these was composed of the usual red tiles, fluted in wavy form,—the common covering of Honduran houses. The building was of one storey, the better to be able to withstand a shock of earthquake.

A youth, in resemblance something between an acolyte and a gentleman usher, admitted us. This official wore black knee-breeches, and black silk stockings, which were partially hidden by a black silk gown—his robe of office probably. He was bareheaded, and

his hair, which was raven black, seemed to grow from the top of the scalp only, and hung straight downwards like a large tassel. He reminded me of a Christ's Hospital boy who had been dyed. This young gentleman's face lacked refinement somewhat, but his manner was very courteous without being in the least servile.

"You are more than welcome," he said; "El Señor Obispo [the Lord Bishop] is always so glad to receive strangers, and a lady from England is a rare visitor indeed. You are the first of that nation that I have seen, for I have never been out of Comayagua."

He passed before us, and ushered me into a room which seemed to serve as a place of waiting for visitors to the palace, and others who could not be left standing in the outer court. The furniture of this apartment was very simple; but some beautifully woven matting covered the floor. The bookshelves contained works of devotion principally, and on a side table stood a stereoscope, a French newspaper, and some photographs. I think the only picture here was a very fine engraving of the Cathedral of Leon in Old Spain. A rocking-chair stood out comfortably near the door; and a bunch of lovely oleander-blossoms was lying upon it, just giving a touch of colour to the cool tones of the surroundings.

A few minutes elapsed, and the attendant reappeared to take me into the Bishop's presence. Eduardo came forward and made as if he would like to accompany me; but he was waived back, and told to wait till the Señora should summon him.

We crossed to the opposite side of the court, and I was shown into a large cool apartment, which was very sparsely and poorly furnished.

A few pictures covered with glass were its only decorations. Shortly afterwards a tall spare man entered the room, vested in the dress of a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church. This was the Bishop of Comayagua, a man of gentle manner and peace-loving disposition, but now bowed down with years, and a sufferer, like many other unoffending persons, from the ruin which successive revolutions had wrought upon the country.

The first salutations ended, the Bishop congratulated me on being an inmate of Madame Victorine's establishment, and then inquired if I was going far?

I replied, "I am on my way, my lord, to San Pedro Sula,"—then seeing that this information only caused a look of surprise, I continued: "I wrote to your lordship announcing my intention of going to San Pedro Sula, on the Doctor's invitation, to superintend his school there."

"I never received that letter. He has never either personally or otherwise mentioned the subject to me."

"Perhaps your lordship will kindly inform me whether the Doctor had obtained your sanction to open a school for the colonists; and also, whether he was authorised by either yourself or the Government to select the teacher."

"Señora, I never heard of the proposition."

"But surely you are aware, my lord, that in the pamphlet published, and, as I believe, sanctioned by the Government, your signature appears to a document which tells the world that you heartily approve of all that this person is doing for the education of the colonists, and you further pledge yourself to support him as much as you can."

"That is true in a general sense; and eighteen months ago, every one of the undertakings with regard to the immigrants seemed in a prosperous state. But things have changed, lamentably changed."

"Why, my lord, what is the reason of this change? I have the letter, written to me at Sydney, a very short time ago, which gives a very prosperous account of the settlement."

The Bishop moved uneasily, and said something about some persons being possessed of a sanguine temperament.

"It is true, is it not, that the Government of Honduras gave a grant of land some time ago for the express purpose of building a schoolroom? Moreover, the Doctor is written of as being a personal friend of Dr Soto, the present President," I affirmed decisively.

"You are right. Dr Soto was very ready, when the colony was first settled, to afford the promoter every encouragement. He looked upon his efforts in introducing labour as a very great step for the improvement of the whole country; but I believe there is a diminution in their personal friendship. This," continued his lordship, "is what I hear; I do not state this last on my own authority."

"Has the Doctor influence to secure me a plantation; or does the assignment rest entirely with the Government?" I asked.

"The assignment of land is entirely in the hands of the Government, and the concessions made are generally very liberal. There is plenty of land to be had, but care should be taken in selecting it," replied the Bishop.

"I should so like to have a place of my own," I replied. "I am fond of teaching,—but it is not pleasant to live in other people's houses,

generally speaking. To make a home of my own was the chief reason that induced me to come to Honduras."

"You can, I assure you, be very useful," said the Bishop, with more warmth of manner; "the mothers in the country are very anxious to have their children educated. You might easily find private pupils, should you prefer this."

"At present, my lord, I consider myself under engagement to the person who wrote to me; I am only sorry that I set out without hearing from you."

"Will you have any objection to tell me what position he offered you, and also what salary?"

"In answer to my letter saying that I must secure pupils, or even boarders, if I took up land in Honduras, in order to pay the first expenses, he wrote that he would immediately make me teacher of the colonists' school at a moderate salary—the amount was not given; and further, that I could increase my means by playing the organ in his church."

At this the Bishop stared, but said nothing. He might well be dumfounded; for I found, on arriving at San Pedro Sula, that neither organ nor any other instrument of music had been seen in the church since it was built long years ago.

The Bishop might have given the Doctor the credit of having lately introduced that "modern innovation," the harmonium, into the church. This, of course, I have

no means of knowing, as the old gentleman persevered in the utmost reticence, and he did not give utterance to any speculative opinions. He looked down, and then suddenly raised his head with the inquiry, "Have you sent any money on to the Doctor?"

"No, my lord; I am expending money enough in travelling so far."

"True." And as if anxious to change the subject, the Bishop spoke of her Majesty the Queen of England. "We, as Catholics," said the gentle old man, "were so touched to hear of the sympathy shown by Queen Victoria to the ex-Empress of the French on the death of her son. Ah, ah!" continued he, "the old stay and the young are taken away. Your royal family loved the poor young lad, and they did the kindest thing of all—they attended him to his grave! *Ay di mi!* But your Queen makes no difference between Catholic and Protestant in her friends; she treated the Imperial Prince with noble kindness. I have prayed for her: she has a large heart."

After some observations about the Ritualist party in England, in which he seemed to take an intelligent interest, the Bishop rose. He passed with me to the threshold, pointing out one or two pictures as he did so. These were very old, and represented portraits of remarkable ugliness. Then the old man gave me his blessing, and I was again standing in the outer court.

CHAPTER X.

"Well, Señora, how do you like our Bishop?" was Eduardo's eager inquiry, as the portal of the palace was closed against us. "Is he not good and gentle?"

"I like the Bishop very much, Eduardo; but I think he appears to be rather old for his important position."

"He wants money, like all in

Honduras. The revolutions and the Honduras railway have taken all the money. I am glad, Señora, however, that the failure of the railway was caused by British mismanagement, and not by ours. My father lost much by it, and they say that the Bishop held a great many shares in that railway."

The Honduras railway had been so often flung in my face whenever the subject of honesty had happened to come under discussion, that I always changed the conversation as soon as possible. This time I said, "Have you seen Marcos?"

"Yes, Señora; and he tells me that he has heard in Comayagua that you are a relative of the Doctor at San Pedro Sula. Is that true, Señora?"

"Certainly not: I never saw the man in my life. Tell Marcos this. I suppose he is living with the gossips of the town, who invent news for want of something to talk about."

We found Madame anxiously awaiting our return; and as I entered she darted forwards and exclaimed, "Ah! the Bishop has told you all about the Doctor; ah! indeed he must have said a great deal about him. Do tell me, Señora,—I am interested for you, although I have not spoken. I suppose his lordship told you much, eh?"

"On the contrary, his lordship said very little. That which renders me now very uncomfortable, is what the Bishop did *not* say," I replied sadly.

"Ah!" replied Madame, speaking as fast as possible, in the French tongue, "he must have the prudence, the caution; you know so little, and perhaps he thought that I was wise, and had not informed you much. Did his lordship ask you of me?"

"I told him that I was in your house; he said you were a kind-hearted woman."

"Ah! no more: well he did not tell you, and it is possible that it would be of much difficulty to state the things in a foreign tongue. His lordship not altogether comprehend you; and, on the other side, you not quite understand him. Is it not?"

This was more than likely, and would account very strongly for the Bishop's reticence; so I replied, "I am afraid the Bishop did not quite make out my Spanish here and there."

"Very possibly, yet you do well—fairly well. Confide to me; the Bishop, did he not tell you one thing about the Doctor?"

"Only that the colony was not nearly so prosperous as it was at first, and that things are changed. His lordship either could not or would not say wherefore. "One thing," I continued, "the Bishop did assert, and that was that your President, Dr Soto, is by no means satisfied with the Doctor, and seemed to infer that he (Dr Soto) is not friendly with him."

"Ah! how could he be? But I won't say more. I don't want to gossip about the man in my house; and perhaps after all, Señora—after all, he may not be so bad. I don't know him," she answered.

"I wish you would tell me honestly what you have heard about him, or what is your reason for saying he may not be so very bad."

"Well, it is for yourself to judge how to act. He is no longer a priest of the diocese of Honduras. That is what the rumour is. Myself, I do not know; but if this is true, the Bishop would have said. Eh?"

"His lordship certainly ought to have done so," I replied, greatly

startled at this news; "but why is he no longer a priest of the diocese?"

"Ah! that I cannot say. The Bishop was obliged to suspend him, because the petition from the people of San Pedro Sula was so strong that his lordship could not act otherwise. You see?"

"No, I don't see. If he be suspended, he would hardly be living at San Pedro now."

"Oh! that is the difficulty. The church is locked up—there is no one officiating. I tell you what; you turn your mule's head and go back, that is my advice."

"I cannot; I have not money enough," I answered. "My expenses are all paid or provided for to San Pedro. The men's agreements are signed for that. If things do not suit, I will get private pupils, and return to England as soon as I can."

"That will cost money," said Madame.

"Yes; I shall have to wait till I can get funds sent from England to bring me away. But I will not think that things are so bad: the Doctor's suspension may be only temporary. If otherwise, he would never have written and engaged me to come to Honduras."

"I think he must have got into trouble after he had written to you to come. That is very likely. You have not put any money into his hands, have you?"

"Not any; I expect him to put money into mine," I answered with a laugh.

"Oh! I am glad he has not any of your money," said the kind-hearted Frenchwoman.

Thus, between Madame's knowing and not knowing, added to the reticence of the Bishop, I had learned enough to make me very

uncomfortable. I resolved, however, to act in a straightforward manner, and so I said to Madame, "There is a telegraph line between Comayagua and San Pedro Sula, is there not?"

"Certainly; not very good; it breaks often, but it does work. Do you want to send a telegram?"

"Yes, I shall telegraph to the Doctor to announce that I am setting off for San Pedro, and to request him either to meet me there, or send some one to represent him."

"Good—very good; write the telegram in Spanish. Stay—I will do so for you; I have more experience: and let me add that you request an answer."

"There will be scarcely time, I think; but, at any rate, he will have to prepare to receive me. There is nothing for it now but to make the best of the situation, and try and shake off evil impressions."

With this resolution I buried myself in the depths of a wide clean hammock, and rocked away "dull care" till the call for supper came.

The lively chat at Madame's table served for a while at least to dispel a tendency to a despondent state of mind, and after supper I was too busy in making preparations for the onward march to dwell upon what I had heard; and so night drew on, and in the early morning afterwards I was fresh, and willing to continue the journey to San Pedro Sula.

"One word more I have to say to you," said Madame, as she stood with her sister in the courtyard looking at the preparations for departure. "You may remain at San Pedro, or you may find it wiser to leave it. Now Mr De Brot, the consul at Puerto Cortez,

is an honourable, kind man, and he does banking business. You write to him—he will know how to get your money from England; but, dear lady, do not allow any one but him to have anything to do with business of any kind for you, whether you go or stay. I mean money business,” she continued, with a knowing waggle of her head.

“Now I must transact my own little business with you,” I said. “Let me know what I am indebted to you for my board and lodging.”

“Ah! bah! nonsense!” returned Madame. “You pay! No, indeed, you won’t; I am too glad to see a lady. You can settle for the mules in the stable; but for entertainment in my house,—no,—never—never. See, too, we are going away; you have taken only the remnants of food—old pigeons, end of this, scrap of that; no,—such is not my usual table for strangers.”

So I settled a very modest score for the stabling of the mules, and then Madame informed me that she and her sister would be a night in San Pedro Sula very shortly, on their way to Puerto Cortez, from whence they were to sail to New York. “We shall meet again,” said Madame Victorine, “so I shall only say *au revoir*.”

We issued out at the great portal of the shady court into a blazing sun, but we were all refreshed and comforted by our rest; and Luisa was so frisky that it was difficult to hold her in. I gave my grateful thanks to both of the ladies for their hospitality; and the last words I heard from the Posada Victorine were the stringent tones of Madame repeating her injunctions as to caution.

The *macho* was so wild that he and Eduardo were sent on first,

and enjoined to keep out of Luisa’s sight, as that animal seemed very much inclined to “bolt”; for she persistently imitated her mate in all his ways, good or evil, and he evidently had come into the world as a racing character. Marcos placed the staid baggage-mule in front of Luisa, and at a quick trot we passed on our way.

Madame Victorine had put down on paper the names of the places wherein it would be best to stop. We had left the grand scenery here, but still we passed through some fine country very badly cultivated. At this point my journal runs: “Halted for a few moments, fifteen miles from Comayagua, at the house of Don Somebody Navarro,—a sickly man, who hospitably gave me some milk and bread. This Señor is reputed rich, but his surroundings are most miserable. He spoke English, having lived in Cuba. The men got provisions in the village, so our store is ample.

“Crossed rather a dangerous but narrow river in the afternoon. I managed the mule pretty fairly and without help: in consequence Marcos condescended to inform me that I was much improved in my riding. The fact is that Luisa is getting to know me, and the kindly beast does her best to travel gently. Arrived at a place called ‘Quevos.’ Here we spent the night; and the house which we had selected was quiet and respectable. It was kept by a poor widow, and it was the cleanest house I had seen. In the evening the woman asked me if I would object to joining in the evening prayer?

“‘Object!’ I replied; ‘I am only too glad to join with Christians in His praise and His worship’

“She told me that the revolution had swept away the church of

the village. The late *cura* of the parish was dead, and there was no money to pay another, as the present Government refused all aid. 'So,' said she, 'a few of us join in the morning and evening prayer. We will not live like heathens.' The room was carefully swept out, and shortly afterwards about a dozen persons of both sexes entered the room, and dropped on their knees. A curtain was drawn aside, and displayed a small altar on which stood a cross, and before it a little vase filled with lovely flowers. A few prayers were said, and a hymn was sung, and then all silently departed. It was a simple heartfelt service,—truly that of the two or three gathered together in Christ's name."

This from my journal, July 25:—

"A long ride was before us on the following morning, as we were anxious to cross the river Blanco by daylight; and I was told that the stream, though very narrow at the crossing-point, was dangerous on account of a peculiarly rapid under-current, which it required some dexterity to fight against. It was a comfort to hear, however, that a canoe was always on the side of this stream. It was arranged that we should sleep at Santa Yzabel after crossing the Rio Blanco (White River). The Rio Blanco here is little more than a narrow and deep strait reputed to be very dangerous. An Indian sits all day in a canoe, to be ready to convey passengers and their baggage to the opposite side.

"The mules and cattle are sent into the stream, and they swim to shore: the bath is very refreshing to them, as they get but scant attention, generally speaking, in the matter of cleansing. However, it is looked upon as a great nuisance to have to take all the

baggage from off the sumpter-mule and the saddles from the others, only to replace all, twenty minutes later, on the opposite side.

"The crossing-place at this point is very picturesque, the bank rising to a mound on one side of the path, whereon the interlaced branches of two magnificent tamarind-trees threw their arms far over the water. The lovely crimson creeper, *Prendas de Amor* (Links of Love), carpeted the ground in great profusion. This creeper has no perfume; but it is an error to suppose that all the wild flowers in these countries are scentless. At this spot, too, the grass was unusually soft and green; and at the root of the trees grew a cream-coloured flower, bearing a violet eye, the name of which it was impossible to discover.

"Save the quinine-tree, I had never been able to ascertain the name of any shrub or flower from either Eduardo or Marcos. The former sometimes characterised a bird, and he was always on the alert to gather any edible fruit that might show itself from out of the hedge or thick-growing foliage.

"Now crossing the river Blanco is to be undertaken, and remembering my experience of the Juan, I look upon the canoe and the Indian with the utmost satisfaction. Two Spanish herdsmen with a flock of superb cattle, a peasant with his wife and mule, and lastly, a long string of charcoal-laden mules, attended by their drivers, had convened here from other directions, and waited to cross the stream. One boatman and one canoe for the work!—it was lucky that the great proportion of this assemblage could be independent of the Indian's aid.

"The *personnel* and baggage would cause fetching and carrying

enough, and, of course, with so much business on hand, there must be a *convenio* on the matter. So the men got out their *cigarillos*, and we two women, after being dismounted, bowed to each other and exchanged some words, and then looked about for a seat under the tamarind-trees. I had already selected my spot, but Eduardo intervened. 'Not so near the roots, Señora; there may be snake-holes about them. Come farther down here; there is plenty of shade, and the grass is short: there is nothing here wherein a serpent can hide.'"

The trail of the serpent is over it all, then. But I remembered that these reptiles are in general very fearful of the human proximity, and the most audacious *culebra* would hardly dare to come among so many. There was plenty of shade under the tree, as Eduardo said, far away from the roots; and the longing for rest was strong upon me. No wonder that so it was in such a place, so cool and secluded, — a spot, too, wherein, for a short time at least, we were safe from the bite of insects, and where myriads of butterflies of every shape and form and size served to brighten the scene with gorgeous colour, and add their quota of cheerfulness to the hard work of life, round which they whirled and fluttered. We deserved our rest, for all of us had ridden many leagues. However, before I seat myself under the friendly tree, I must see that Eduardo unsaddles Luisa properly. This supervision was necessary, as the young fellow had a habit of letting the saddle slip to the ground, pommel downwards. What would become of me should this most useful of projections become damaged or broken off at this stage of the journey? I was feeling weaker,

so every risk which would incur discomfort was to be avoided.

The saddle was carried into the shade of a shrub, and then I took my seat and signed to the country-woman to come and sit near me. A little brandy-and-water in the travelling flask and a few *tortillas* were all the fare I had to offer. This I proposed to share with the stranger, to which she readily assented; and on her own behalf she produced some *queso*, and some dried-looking green fruit which was far from inviting. A few slices of roasted plantain rolled up in leaves gave a better turn to affairs, and the final appearance of a bottle of milk was really to this feast *crème de la crème*.

The men meanwhile unloaded the mules, chattering and gesticulating as they did so. The delight of the animals as their packs disappeared was curious to witness, and our usually staid baggage-mule gave expression to her satisfaction by kicking her neighbours right and left, and lashing at everything she could lay heels on.

The first excitement of freedom being over, she rolled on the soft sweet grass, and then walked in among the charcoal mules and began deliberately to bite and kick at them. A shout from Marcos and a tremendous whack from his stick acted as a deterrent; and with the objurgatory, "Ah, mula redonda!" (O fool of a mule!) our friend was "chivied" up a bank, and made to wait there until her turn for the swim should come. This was well for the human as well as for the animal kind, for a stray blow might have fallen upon some of us; and it is well known that a kick from a mule is far more severe than a kick from a horse.

My companion expressed the

opinion that the refractory beast had been bitten by the mule-fly, for it was still running about, and rubbing and kicking against the bushes. The agony from the bite of this fly is very great, and in passing through swamps the insect is sure to be lying in wait. It is large in size, and bears some resemblance to the bluebottle-fly; generally it makes its attack near the eye. "I know a little about the matter," continued my informant, "and I assure you a fly will hang about one particular mule for many leagues after its 'habitat' has been passed. A good mule-teen always looks out for this pest, and is careful to take it off the animal, for not only does it sting deep, but it also draws a good deal of blood."

We talked and rested for nearly an hour. The Indian who owned the canoe had been invited to land and to partake of the men's rations, and the poor fellow seemed to enjoy most thoroughly the kindness and good companionship which he had fallen in with. The country-woman told me that her husband bred mules on a rancho in the interior, and that they were on the way to Santa Cruz to receive the money for a sale of animals which he had made to the engineer of the railway works near that town. "They would not stop at Santa Yzabel, as we intended to do," she said, because they had friends in the interior some miles farther on, and they could reach the place before night-fall.

The crossing was effected, but it took a long time, owing to the troublesome current. This was so rapid, that even our audacious friend, the *macho*, point-blank refused to enter the water, and had finally to be lugged forward

by the head, and pushed vigorously from behind, to get him afloat. When fairly in the water, he refused to come out, and amused himself by swimming round the canoe, to the utmost peril of that frail transport. The Indian, agile as a monkey, at a sudden turn leapt on his back; and so, with the help of another man, this wretch was hauled, braying and stamping, to the opposite shore. The observations of Marcos on this occasion are not fit to be recorded to ears polite; but nevertheless, he never laid a finger on the beast.

Was not the *macho* a valuable animal, and was not Marcos expecting to sell him well on the return journey?

All being at length happily managed, we friends of an hour took farewell of each other, and sped on our several ways. A few miles' distance brought my party to Santa Yzabel, which, instead of being a village, as we had expected, was merely a half farm, half hut, lonely dwelling. It was particularly rich in grass, and this delighted Marcos for his mules' sake. I, on my own part, revelled in the pure milk, in strolling among the cows, and inhaling the air, which here was quite redolent of wild thyme.

The woman of the house was very obliging, but she possessed little wherewith to replenish our commissariat. A tough fowl, and a few *tortillas* which she baked expressly for us, were all that she could procure. The night was wretched, and this had the salutary effect of causing us to strike our tents very early on the following morning. A bowl of milk was my own breakfast, and it was a chance if I could get anything more for many hours.

My journal of July 27, may be admissible here:—

"We rode several miles, and passed some glorious cedar-trees. Here, for the first time, I saw that lovely bird the *Cardinalis rubra*, which is remarkable for being so nervous concerning its own safety as never to build unless it feels itself to be perfectly safe. It will sometimes choose five or six different places before it finishes its nest. The highest and darkest cedar-tree is its usual habitat, and its song is very peculiar, something between a warble and a whistle. It derives its name from the splendour of the crest, which is of a brilliant scarlet colour, intermixed here and there with a few tips of peacock-green hue. The female has no crest, but she is an elegantly shaped bird.

"It was the peculiar note of this songster that first drew Eduardo's attention to our beautiful neighbour. As the ground was soft, and we had been treading upon a thick layer of fragrant cedar-needles, it was possible that there had not been noise enough to startle the bird. His magnificent crest glanced through the background of dark cedar foliage with great effect. We stopped simultaneously; and Eduardo, stepping up to me, said—"Señora, will you lend me the revolver? I can bring him down."

"No, Eduardo—it would be cruelty; besides, the bird would be torn to pieces; don't think of shooting it."

"But, Señora, I would like the feathers."

"Very well, Eduardo, I can only say, if you shoot that bird, I will not give you the revolver, as I had intended to do, when we arrive at San Pedro Sula."

This settled the matter, and

Eduardo returned the little case to the canvas bag from which he had half withdrawn it.

We had never, as yet, had occasion to use this implement as a weapon of defence, but I had from time to time allowed the lad to discharge it; for, by the generosity of the officer of the Clyde, suitable ammunition had been also supplied with the little case. Eduardo had taught me the use of the weapon, and I had more than once discharged it for practice; but I never was quite happy when handling it, and I rather looked forward to the time when I could safely get rid of it.

Marcos was beginning to be impatient at the delay, and suddenly raised a shout. This had the effect of scaring the birds, one or two of which flew with a shrill cry to some more distant trees. We saw them more perfectly by this means, and thus satisfied, I cared little for being peremptorily hurried on by the muleteer.

My journal goes on to say that we arrived next at a place called Maniobar. Very pretty, but the inhabitants were holding some races, and this being the case, we could procure neither food nor shelter. These were the most churlish beings we had encountered. Nothing for it but to ride to Coalcar.

In another way Maniobar was remarkable: it was here that we saw a large poisonous snake. The reptile literally crawled between the feet of the baggage-mule; and Luisa, with the instinctive horror which all mules have for snakes, nearly jumped her own height from off the ground. The men drew out their *machetes* quickly; but the reptile was too quick for them, and raising its crest with a hiss, it glided beneath some

bushes. This was rather a narrow escape.

The night was particularly wretched; and the place at which we halted was so uninviting, that I proposed, as the moon was full, to travel at night.

The *mozos* evidently feared, as they always had feared, to travel after dusk, so this was negatived. The result was, "I had my hammock slung outside, and made the best of it. Swarms of mosquitoes, and very little to eat and drink."

The next entry records a far more pleasant experience. "After a weary ride, we arrived at Santa Cruz. This town is built with some regularity, and is far in advance of many that we have passed. We went first to the principal inn, but finding that the proprietor owned a farmhouse in the neighbourhood which was on our route, we decided to go there. Marcos wanted to linger in the town, so he readily agreed to go to the farm with me and the mules, if I would grant him and Eduardo leave of absence till nine o'clock in the evening. I agreed to this, and by three o'clock in the afternoon I

was left in the hands of a cheery Spanish woman, who was wife of the landlord of the inn at Santa Cruz.

It was a great treat to meet with one of so much refinement as this lady proved to be; and when I had bathed and dined comfortably, I quite enjoyed the walk with her in the cool of the evening. She was the very description of woman which Honduras wanted, and as we sat in the verandah taking coffee, I could not help telling her so.

"We have had many misfortunes of late years, Señora," she said, "and many bad examples from those who assume to teach us progress in commercial transactions. Just look now at that Honduras railway! It might have made the country! Ah, Señora, we have to thank the British people for ruining our trade and commerce for many years to come. Ruin and loss make women hopeless, Señora, and that has been the case in Spanish Honduras. However, we are hoping now for brighter days. America is bringing in both labour and money. Yes, I think better times are coming—God grant it!"

AN IDLE HOUR IN MY STUDY.

I HAVE deserted a fairly merry party, who seemed fifteen minutes ago determined to have a lengthy evening — with a good piece of the night thrown in — at the round table. By that last expression I do not intend to secularise a phrase which has been consecrated to the Pendragon chivalry; I only wish to have it understood that my friends and relatives are, in right merry pin, gathered about a table that is round; and as it is the only one, save little tea-dots, which, being of that form, appertains to me, I have used the definite article. That explanation will, as I hope, appease any and every shade which in the neighbourhood of Tintagel or Caerleon may look over the shoulders of 'Maga's' readers, as all ingenuous shades are known to do. And I proceed to say that, notwithstanding my sincere respect and affection for amusements which are enjoyed at round tables, I have sought my desk this evening intending to make progress with a literary labour which I have in hand.

But I find myself little inclined to settle to steady work. I have been greatly exercised all day by an account which an acquaintance has given me of a large and cruel piece of villany which has been perpetrated lately in America, and by a wealthy man. My informant was eloquent on this subject. He has resided in America, and has adopted the ideas of levellers, pessimists, and others, which are becoming prevalent there. Though an honest, liberal-minded man in most things, he has a strong prejudice against riches in general, and says they never fail to corrupt

their owners; while he holds the poor and humble to be the only virtuous people. These notions disturb me. I know that they are not true. But, while one's nerves are tingling at the great depravity of a rich rogue, one longs to fortify one's belief by reviewing this question of the comparative merits of rich and poor.

That many poor persons and many poor communities are incorruptibly honest, I have no doubt at all. Indeed I have experience which enables me to say positively that such honest people do exist. Once in days long gone by, it was my lot to go and live, and carry out some transactions of importance, in a remote and very wild district—wild, that is, as to its natural features. I asked a friend who had been there before me, whether it was necessary to be always armed there, and he laughed at the idea.

"You may send," said he, "a bag of gold coin by a peasant to a distant place over the hills, and feel certain that it will be safely delivered."

This I afterwards found to be a true account. Later on in life I was in a village of the Alps, and had the misfortune to lose, while travelling, an important part of my luggage. My case seemed to myself hopeless; nevertheless I took what steps I could to recover the property. In doing so I consulted the manager of a rather large hotel a few miles off—a German, who spoke English.

"Much will depend," said he, after he had heard my lamentation, "upon whether your lost goods may have gone beyond this district or not: if they have, I have

not much comfort to give you; if they have not, you will certainly get them again, *for they are all honest people here.*"

The things were brought back in about a week after that, with straps, locks, and hinges all in order. I asked myself whether, if the loss had happened in a country district of England, I could have been so fortunate, and decided that the chances were very much against my being so. It is a fine thing to claim to rule the waves, a very grand idea to have dominions on which the sun never sets; but one feels, at a time when a large rascality has been occupying the public mind, that it is a thing of no mean importance to live among people of approved honesty. Haroun the Just, if he had come among them, would probably have placed my Alpine villagers very high in his scale of desert—perhaps would have had it recorded in letters of gold (his favourite blazon), **THEY ARE ALL HONEST PEOPLE HERE.**

Some years ago I was journeying between Peel Castle and Douglas in the Isle of Man. My vehicle was an outside car. At every cabin, or cluster of cabins, which I passed, miserably poor-seeming children came running after the car and begging, in very foreign English, "Please give a ha'penny." These extracted some of my coppers. One group, ragged and importunate, escorted the car a good way, and at last obtained a present; so I passed on in peace. In peace for a mile or so; but having done that distance, I was aware of an enemy in the rear. From whence it had collected I did not know (for I had passed no house lately), but there was certainly a troop in hot pursuit, their little naked feet pattering over the road at their highest speed—and wonder-

ful speed and wind did they exhibit. They had not, however, prudence enough to save breath for the chase, for they kept up a shrill shouting.

"What the devil does that mean?" I asked of my carman, after the pursuit and the screaming had lasted some quarter of an hour.

"God knows, your honour!" he replied; "I suppose they want ha'pence."

"They don't expect me to stop the car and wait for them?"

"Oh no, sir, not a bit of it. They know what they're after."

And so they did. They followed me another mile or mile and a half, shouting still, but more breathlessly. At last we walked a hill, which gave them an advantage, and at the top of the rise was a drinking-place, to use which for the horse's benefit the equipage pulled up. Much encouraged by this halt, the pursuers now pushed on with renewed vigour. They got so near that I, who am not very long-sighted, perceived the biggest of the small fry to be holding up his arm as if to show something; if so, I could not distinguish what it was.

We waited to be run into: and then there arose such a chorus of shrill Manx utterances as showed that something of unusual interest to them had occurred; but, guessing accurately the defect of my education, the whole cry clustered about the driver, who had descended from his seat and was standing by the drinking horse. As soon as he could a little quell the clamour, he came to enlighten me.

"It's nothing, sir—nothing to make such a noise about; only, your honour threw them a bit of silver which they knew you didn't mean, and they've just brought it

back, that's all." Yes, that was all. It seems that I had not sorted my change, and a half-crown, consigned to the pocket which should have received coppers only, had been, with some of its baser companions, chucked on to the road at the last begging-station. That was, after all, but an ordinary occurrence; the pursuit of me for such a cause I thought a very extraordinary occurrence. Tears come into my eyes as I write it, when I remember the little bare-footed wretch racing along and holding up the silver, though it is to me an old incident.

Now I hope that what I have written above is good evidence that I have no wish to deny, or to veil, or to make light of the honesty which is undoubtedly to be found sometimes among poor people. Such virtue is the more remarkable, forasmuch as those who exhibit it are peculiarly open to temptation. Yet the instances of it are not very common—indeed it is because they are not common that we note them so carefully. Again, such depravity in a well-to-do man as I have been exercised withal to-day, is striking and distressing because it is uncommon. Heartless and unpardonable as it is, it is exceptional. To find a great rogue among the rich now and then, or an instance of honesty that cannot be shaken here and there among the poor, proves nothing as regards the virtue of either class. There are good and bad in all classes, and in each of us is a tendency to be "desperately wicked"; so that, be we rich or poor, we require to keep a careful guard on ourselves.

Having thus considered this question which had been distressing me, and settled it once more as well as I could, there is nothing to prevent my going on with my

work: but I seem to-night to be possessed by a contrary and perverse spirit; for, prompted, as I suppose, by reflecting upon the rich and poor in classes, I begin to think about the strong feelings which are gathering in many sections of the community against the sports and pastimes of the rich. It is to be feared that these feelings proceed in too many persons from envy; howbeit, there are undoubtedly many who conscientiously object to sports on the ground that they are cruel, that they offer occasions of gambling, that they encourage idleness, and so on.

I am quite incompetent to take up the attack or the defence of sports; and, were I ever so well qualified, both sides have been so amply advocated that it would be a work of supererogation to examine the question. The only remark I would make is, that the friends of sport are such thorough friends that they will give no ear at all to an adverse argument; while its enemies are pertinaciously deaf and blind to everything which tells in its favour. Be the rights of the case, however, what they may, I think I can see that many of our most cherished amusements are doomed to extinction within an age from now. Hostile attacks may be the immediate, and seem to be the principal, causes of the changes which will come; but if we look at the notable variations in the sports themselves during the present century, we shall see that things have been working together towards their decadence. Facilities of communication and the spread of wealth have wholly altered the conditions of the sports; and democratic jealousy looks askance at them as aristocratic, notwithstanding that they are more generally attainable than they used to be.

The amount of organisation which is required to adapt them to the circumstances of the day, and the large migrations which at certain seasons they occasion, cannot but draw public attention to them. They are no longer the pastimes of a few idle hours, but they have become gigantic systems of recreation. They cannot be hid, any more than a city that is set upon a hill. All their qualities will be closely scanned, and a great deal made of those which seem objectionable. While they were *quasi* private, their affairs were principally in the hands of those who enjoyed them; now that they have become institutions, the public claim and exercise a right to criticise them. The same power which suppressed the cockpit and the prize-ring, is occupying itself with the affairs generally of the sporting world, and will certainly find means of depressing it.

The democratic spirit is not a modern invention. In old days the prevailing circumstances generally inclined men to subordinate it to other influences. Now, new forces, chiefly the pressure of population, give it momentum; and one wonders how and where it will discharge itself. As long as there may be "fresh woods and pastures new" to occupy, it is to be expected that emigration from old countries will to a large extent relieve the crush. But from the pace at which the world is moving, there is a look as if, within a conceivable period, our race may have spread over the whole soil of the globe, reclaimed deserts, overrun and essayed to cultivate mountain-ranges! What, then, is likely to be the next move? Will the struggle for life control the num-

bers of mankind, or will famine or pestilence lend an occasional sweep to moderate the multitude of mouths? I never heard from any one a hint of what I am now going to say, but it does not seem quite an irrational supposition. The oceans and seas of the globe were created to be something more than a mere waste of waters: so we may without presumption suppose. At present, whatever other designs of the Creator they may fulfil, they certainly put limits to human occupation and mark out certain areas of the earth as available for our species; while the rest—the major portion—of the orb, is not for our use and possession except as a great highway. But may not these great waters, when more land shall be required for our race, be gradually withdrawn so as to expose more dry land? I remember to have seen it shown in 'Maga'¹ how the waters have retired from the neighbourhood of the Caspian and Aral seas, leaving them but extensive lakes. It would seem to be geologically demonstrable that a vast sea once covered the region of Central Asia which lies to the westward of the Hindoo Koosh, and the range of mountains which trends northward therefrom. This great sea rolled so far south as the Persian mountains. Since those days, when Persia was an isthmus, the waters have receded northward to the confines which we see on modern maps, leaving the Caspian and Aral lakes as *souvenirs* of its once extensive dominion. The area of land thus uncovered has been immense—one-half, or thereabouts, of what is now called Central Asia! If there were no corresponding submergence of land at the time when this retreat of the sea took place

¹ *Vide* 'Blackwood's Magazine' for August 1880—Art. "Central Asia: the Meeting-place of Empires."

(and it is impossible to say whether there was or was not), a very sensible addition was made to the regions available for human occupation. Such additions, made at intervals, might well furnish footing for our kind for a longer period than we can form any but the vaguest idea of.

I know that it might be objected to this, that the quantity of matter in our earth and its atmosphere is probably constant; whither, then, can the mass of waters be sent, if they are to disappear off the land, so as to leave the weight of the earth undiminished? The answer is, that the component parts of the water may be dispersed into solid or gaseous matter. Gases added to the air would, of course, alter its composition; but we do not know but that, under the new circumstances of more land, a differently composed atmosphere might be convenient. There may be in the future a larger accumulation of ice about the poles, which would dispose of some of the waters, while the spherical form of the planet might be perfected thereby.

We are so accustomed to the immense quantity of water shown on our terrestrial globes and our maps, that it probably seldom occurs to any of us to marvel at the great excess of the immersed over the dry portions of the world. The reason for this being so now, must be an excellent reason; but we are nowhere taught that the large areas of seas must always remain as they are now. Compared to the volume of the earth, the deepest sea on its surface is but a wash. The amount of water might be diminished with scarce any disturbance of the sphere as part of the solar system. Thought of this

ought to make us view the rapid multiplication of mankind with hopeful feelings; for if there be accommodation reserved for our descendants beneath where the seas now roll, thousands upon thousands of years must elapse before they will be straitened for space. It has been nowhere told us that the seas will gradually diminish as the earth becomes fuller and fuller of human life, but it is told us that in the new and perfected earth there will be no more sea.¹ It does not, therefore, seem irrational to expect that there may be a gradual decrease of the water on the surface of the earth as the world grows older. The waters of the Deluge disappeared and went somewhither:—

“And now the tops of hills, as rocks,
appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their
furious tide.”

The same wonder which took place after the Deluge may be re-enacted so as to uncover more of the land,—the seas so eliminated being disposed of as were those which overwhelmed the world in the days of Noah.

The rising up of the land, which used once to be so much in favour with geologists, but which, as I believe, is rather out of fashion just now, might effect the “gathering together of the waters”; and if by that means portions of the land were uncovered, there might be no withdrawal from the globe of any of the seas, only an increase of the depth of some of them. I write this having in my mind’s eye the valley of the river Jordan (about submerging which we have read so much of late). If we believe in great upheavings of the

¹ Rev. xxi. 1.

land, we may suppose that the Holy Land was once under the sea; that then the mountains from Judea through Samaria and Galilee on to Lebanon, rose up and cut off the Mediterranean on the west from the water—made by that division an inland sea—on the east. This inland sea wasted itself in course of time, as the Dead Sea does now, and allowed to appear the greater part of Palestine. The Sea of Galilee, the course of the Jordan below it, and the Dead Sea, are all below the level of the Mediterranean—the last of them more than a thousand feet below. Only the dam which keeps out the Mediterranean prevents the valley of the Jordan from being filled with salt water from the Levant. The chain of mountains which I just now mentioned is that dam. The rising up of similar chains as dams might recover other large areas which are now submerged.

While I was running my eye along the map tracing the mountain-range from Syria southward, it lighted upon the name En-dor, which revived thoughts which have come to me more than once before concerning the doings there of Saul and the witch. It was so very like what is reported to occur at some spiritualistic *séances*, that one is apt to suppose it to be the model of some of those which prove to be impostures. By which remark I am far from intending to hint the least doubt of what is recorded in the Book of Samuel. I only say that the scene there described has been imitated by charlatans in these and in other times. It is quite clear from the commands of Scripture that no such thing ought to be attempted. We know for certain that many pretended callings of "spirits from the vasty deep" have been closely watched and proved to be impostures.

It is a thing very worthy of remark that we are profoundly ignorant of the condition of the departed immediately after death, notwithstanding that so much has been told and written which would seem to let light in upon the matter.

It is a common enough belief among persons who have not thought very earnestly on the subject, that they will be able after death to return to the world for certain objects determined on in their lifetime. I have known threats made by country people to come back and annoy persons who may have offended or thwarted them. It was imparted to me, when I was young, by a female servant who lived many years with us, and who was very learned in such matters, that the ability or otherwise of deceased persons to appear again among the living depended entirely upon whether the clergymen who might bury them should do their duty or not. "If," said she, "the passon turn'th the book at the right place, that binds mun to the earth; they can never trouble nobody again no more. But if he's careless or stupid about it, then there's no saying what skermadging there may be with 'em before they be properly laid. And 'tis a shame and a sin of passons not to see at the burying-time that they be rightly and tightly bound down."

But there must have been some people who did not admit this power of the clergyman to lay an embargo on the departed; for I remember one instance of an old woman threatening to haunt a clergyman, which she would scarcely have done had she believed that he could effectually prevent her from molesting him or any one else. Her threat was uttered to a quaint old sexton, whom I once mentioned

in 'Maga.'¹ This elder was engaged one day in staking off a corner of the churchyard, the vicar having, for some reason, decreed that no more interments should be made in that corner. While he was thus employed, the old woman of whom I write came by and demanded the meaning of this stockade which he was making. The sexton told her; whereupon she said, "That won't do at all, Willie; I alays meant to be buried there." "But, my dear, you see you can't; so you'd better look out for other lodgings." She replied, "No, that I shan't; for my man lieth there, and my poor Dick there, and I mean to lie between 'em. And I tell 'ee what it is," added she, waxing warm, "if I ben't buried there, as I say, I'll come back to Measter Jan, and to you too—mind that!"

Not long after her departure, came along Measter Jan himself—that is to say, the vicar (he was a native of the place, and well known from boyhood to the older parishioners). He paused a minute to return the sexton's good-morrow, and to observe the progress of the work of enclosure.

"Sartain is it, sir, that no more be put in this corner?" asked the old man.

"Certain, William; not another body shall be buried within the stakes."

"You don't know, sir, what you have a-brought upon yourself by that. Old Jenny Weldon have been here, and she saith she's determined to lie in here, because her husband and her cheeld be both here."

"Poor old body, I'm very sorry for her, but I can't make any exception; she must be bestowed elsewhere."

"Then I tell 'ee what she saith.

She saith, if she isn't put there, she'll come back to you, and me too."

"Really, now! Well, that was wicked of her. However, there's no help. I'm not frightened of her, William; are you?"

"Well, no, my dear, I be not. If she goeth to a good place, she won't care to come back to this sorrowful world again; and if she sail'th in another direction, there's one there that'll take care she *don't* come back."

I never heard that the old lady came back; I cannot be sure that the vicar and sexton, or either of them, outlived her.

I suppose that the world contains as many odd things and odd people as ever it did; but I never now come across such quaint persons as I saw every day in my early youth. The old sexton was an oddity if ever there was one; and there was a poor old woman who used to come and beg for money to buy snuff, of which she took an immense quantity when she could get it. Her third husband—a miserable old man—was a sufferer from asthma; her second, to the best of my recollection (I trust that I do not wrong his memory) had been hanged; her first, who formed the chief topic of her conversation, had been a soldier, and had died in the service of his country. She had been a heroine in little, if her account of herself could be credited, and I believe that she told it truly. A century or so back from now, her husband's regiment had been at the island of St Christopher, in the West Indies, and it had some sharp encounters with French troops, who contended with us for that colony. On one occasion when the red-coats had had to re-

¹ 'Blackwood's Magazine' for January 1884—Art. "Figures in the Fire."

tire, there was consternation and affliction among them, not so much on account of the check which they had received (for that they hoped to retort upon the enemy shortly), but because the colours were missing. They had, in the hurry of retreat, been secreted somewhere near the field of action. It was not thought that they were in the enemy's possession; but there was the greatest reason to fear that the Frenchmen, who had advanced as the English retreated, would in rummaging the neighbourhood discover and seize them. The colonel, at thought of having to report the loss of his colours, was well-nigh distracted. He would think of nothing else, and could hardly be got to issue the necessary orders for the safety and sustenance of those under his direction. But he would seem to have been a favourite of the regiment; because, great as was the general danger and privation, it was a sorrow all round that the commanding officer took the loss of the colours so much to heart. He was assured that they would retake them, or perish in the attempt; but he could not bear that things so precious should be dishonoured by being in the enemy's keeping for an hour.

Now it was that my old friend began to be prompted to do a deed of heroism. All through the camp the men were lamenting the colonel's affliction, and inventing all sorts of senseless plans for recovering the colours and relieving his anxiety. One soldier spoke of a way by which a black man might, by following certain paths, get unsuspected to the place of concealment, and, if he were at all adroit, bring off the silk hid in some parcel of farm stuff. But to this scheme it was objected that a black man, though he could be sufficiently cunning when after any devilry

of his own, would be likely to make a bad adventure in a case like this, where discovery would be followed not only by failure, but probably by punishment also. It was, moreover, considered highly inexpedient to disclose the hiding-place to a slave, who might sell the secret to the enemy.

The woman heard all this discussed, but said nothing to the soldiers. She, however, thought over what had been said, and formed a resolution. As soon as it was dusk she repaired to the colonel's tent, asked to see him on a matter of importance, and obtained admission. She told him how sad it made everybody to know of the trouble he was in, and that she would make an effort for relieving his distress if he would explain to her accurately the whereabouts of the place of hiding, and would give her a pass to get beyond the English sentinels. After speaking with her for a short time, he looked kindly upon the idea, and gave her all the information which had found its way to himself. He also wrote with his own hand the necessary passport.

"Now God bless you, my woman!" said he: "if you succeed, you will save the honour of the regiment; and if you fail, and come back to us, you shall have the thanks of the whole corps for your daring."

"Sir," answered she, "I don't value my life the point of a pin when there's so much trouble. If the luck isn't very much against me, I'll make my way to the place you've a-described; and, please God, I'll come again with some comfort for 'ee."

The night, fortunately, was pretty dark. She dressed herself in sombre habiliments and set off on her quest. With great cleverness and patience she made her

way unobserved through the enemy's lines, and crawling and crouching, then making a run when a chance offered, she, by following the directions which she had received, reached the place which she was seeking, torn and bleeding from passages through the bush, and with her limbs sprained from working over rugged ground and rocks. But she was at last rewarded by putting her hand upon the precious colours. They had been torn from their staves, and put away under a rock or in a hollow tree, I forget which. Her courage revived on having so far succeeded, and she set to work with fresh energy. Having taken off her gown, she sewed the colours in between the stuff and the lining. This being part of her plan, she had been prepared with needle and thread; but it must have been a work of some skill for a woman, tired and torn as she was, and in the dark, to achieve such a job. It was, however, managed, and the dress put on again; and then she started to perform the other half of her task, glowing with the thought that, happen what might, the colours were probably safe from the enemy. If I recollect aright, she managed so as to escape observation altogether, and not to be challenged at all. Arrived in the English camp, she lost no time in extricating her charge, which just after daybreak she took to the anxiously expectant colonel. His relief and joy were beyond expression; as the old lady put it, he was ready to jump out of his skin.

For this achievement she got her full meed of celebrity, and probably some more substantial earnest of the officers' and soldiers' gratitude. I am afraid, however, that the poor thing did not benefit in the way of gratuity or pension from the public purse. This may

have been because her connection with the regiment was soon afterwards dissolved by the death of her husband, who fell with harness on his back, and his breast to the foe. Another fight, in which artillery took part, had ended, as I suppose, in the success of our side, because the field seems to have been accessible to our camp-followers after the action. The woman went on to the ground impelled, as she herself said, by a sad misgiving that he had perished. We know that there have been such presentiments in people of all stations.

"I was as sure that a was dead as if I'd seed un killed," the old body said, years after, to a lady from whom she would often beg snuff.

"And did you find him?"

"I made un out, my dear, amongst the dead and wounded."

"Was there no hope?"

"None. Stone dead."

"How horrible! How I pity you! What did you do?"

"I kneeled down beside un, put my arm round his waist, and kissed (ay, that I did) his dear hand."

"Did you not put your arm round his neck and kiss his lips?"

"My dear, the head of un was a-knocked off."

I said a little above that the quaint old characters seemed to be dying out: I may add, that of two classes of oddities with the appearance of whom I used to be tolerably familiar, I have not for years encountered a specimen.

The first of these classes is occasional drunkards, who, when well moistened, delighted to wander about the streets, sometimes for two or three hours on end, making short remarks to them who passed by, or perhaps coming to a halt in the middle of the road and uttering grand soliloquies to heaven and

earth. I do not remember to have seen two of these companions adrift at the same time, to have seen them quarrelsome, or to have thought that they intended to be spiteful or offensive, though doubtless they were coarse. A very large indulgence was accorded to them on all hands. They were rarely meddled with by the constables, although notice might at last be conveyed to their homes that their infirmity was in the peripatetic stage; and then a wife or a daughter coming gently on the scene, would take the hand of the old voluptuary and lead him by easy stages, smiling and weeping, to his home.

The second class is of scolds. I call to mind women who, generally standing at their doors, would rail at the top of their voices for the greater part of a day. I do not mean that they would be having a quarrel; but that one woman, having had her temper rubbed the wrong way, would continue scolding so as to be a nuisance to a whole neighbourhood. Often, when one of these shrews has been holding forth, have I asked of a bystander what ailed her, or whether any one had offended her. And I never remember to have received a more satisfactory answer than—"No; nobody have a-done nothing to her. 'Tis the way of her. She have got a long tongue." The scolding did not seem to utterly preclude attention to domestic work. The shrew would boil her pot, get ready her potatoes, and observe her children, but use every interval in these occupations to let the world become aware of her mind being ill at ease. These storms blew themselves out somehow, and left very little trace of the commotion. Between the out-breaks, the shrews would be affable and merry. Sometimes a lull would be of such length as to lead one to

hope there had been a permanent improvement, when, some unlucky morning, while the lady herself was too far off to be plainly seen, would be heard her ominous voice proclaiming that everything in her neighbourhood was to be ajar and out of joint for that day.

A scold's eloquence, though her neighbours are deafened with it, always seemed to me to be addressed, not to them, but to herself. It was a sort of blow-pipe to her indignation, to prevent the latter from declining below red-heat. She casts away, in spend-thrift fashion, myriads of that commodity which thoughtful people prize as the great circulating medium of mental wealth. Squandered words, what refuse they are! Words well applied, how vast, how prevailing is their influence! To the unthinking they are foolishness; to those who can wield them they are power and wisdom. These "rascal counters" which are so easily coined and voided, and which to the uninitiated pass for vulgar ware, are the forces which direct and control human emotion and human action. Used with skill, they can discover and touch the hidden springs of feeling. There is no known condition of humanity wherein words skilfully used may not be electrical in their effects. They can beguile us of our sympathy or command our admiration.

Words, or combinations of words, become divided according to their properties; for the winning of sympathy and the awakening of admiration, though both the work of words, must be achieved by quite different adaptations of words. Those words which will suffice for the one purpose will be by no means competent for the other. I have travelled now from scolding to the intelligent employment of a vocabulary. But so thoughts wander;

and having drifted on to this subject of word-power, I am inclined to examine it, though I cannot search it profoundly.

The source of interest and the source of awe and high veneration are very distinct. Sympathy may be said to create interest; and exaltation above, or other distant removal from, that with which we can sympathise, awe and worship. We know well how in a landscape the introduction of figures unlocks our feelings, which would not have yielded to a solitude however skillfully portrayed. The same is true in poetry; the "one touch of nature" introduced in the appropriate place is a link between writer and reader and subject, greatly awakens our sympathy, and increases the pleasure with which we follow the written thoughts. Where Milton is weighing the attractions of a life of ease and pleasure against those of a life of study and devotion to the Muses, he does not content himself with stating the voluptuous alternative in a general way, but exclaims—

"Were it not better done as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neëra's hair?"

presenting little scenes of dalliance which place him on common ground with his reader, and make the latter feel how entirely the argument concerns himself as a fellow-man. The poet's contention is a high one—his object to draw away the mind from sensual and ignoble things to lofty contemplation; yet in doing this, he thinks it not unbecoming to stoop to earth—and not to stoop only, but to exhibit that which is earthy in all its charm and distinctness, in order that he may win the sympathy of his reader first, and having so attracted him, soar with him away towards the sky. The more fa-

miliar a scene or an illustration is made to us, the more we recognise it as one in which we ourselves might have borne a part—the more ready are we to yield our sympathy, and to be moved as the author wished us to be moved.

On the other hand, if the intention be to arouse awe or veneration, particulars are by skilful writers avoided, and we have for the most part only the common and generic names of things; the more indefinite and incomprehensible the images appear, the greater being their fitness for the purpose. Burke insists on obscurity as a source of the sublime, and points out many instances wherein Milton has resorted to this method when he would subdue the mind by grand ideas—citing his descriptions of Satan and of Death, and his heaping together of vague indeterminate images to appal the mind, as

"Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens,
and shades of death,
A universe of death."

A little reflection suffices to convince us that, where terror or reverence is to be produced, the less particularising there is of objects the better. Particularising argues a greater or less exactness, and exactness is incompatible with the sublime emotions. To excite in us the necessary terror or respect, objects must be made to appear to us as removed from our comprehension or control, making us feel ourselves to be little or nothing by comparison, and only fit to bow down in helpless submission or in adoration—as Job, overawed by a sense of God's power, says, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Milton refrains sometimes from using a substantive at all when a very terrible idea is intensified, as "over the vast abrupt."

Words are fairies. You may narrate a story or deliver your sentiments in various combinations of words, all in some sort rendering your meaning; but you know that of these combinations some would give a totally wrong colour to your utterances and awaken a wrong emotion, some would fall very far short of your intention, and some would do your bidding quite satisfactorily. It is not easy to say why this is. Many explanations have been offered. That words, as they fall upon the ear or meet the eye, do produce emotions which synonymous expressions would not in the same place produce, there can be no doubt; and yet I cannot think that the mere sounds can of themselves give pleasure or pain. There must be association of ideas with the potent words; yet the connection is so hard to trace, it is such a mysterious influence, that many a man gives up the quest and rests content with the belief, as I stated it, that words are fairies, without prying into the source of their magic.

Monosyllables and dissyllables seem to be for the most part those which readily affect the mind. And the reason of this probably is, that common, general, widely comprehensive words, being invented in the infancy of a language, are usually short sounds; and therefore short sounds may, and for the most part do, represent very extensive ideas. Refer to the passage "rocks, caves, lakes," &c., which I quoted above from Milton, and you will observe that in the whole of it the words are monosyllables, except the word *universe*. All of them are words which would be invented very early in the life of a language.

It often happens, I fancy, that

we judge a composition to be very simple and unstudied because the words used in it are short and familiar,¹ and such as are in everybody's mouth. But simple words may be made to convey very grand ideas, and may be used by those who have thought profoundly on the matter which they have to impart. Thus it is not astonishing that simple words skilfully arranged make up the most powerful passages which we encounter in letters. The Scriptures abound with writings of this character, which impress their meaning with tremendous force, although the component words are such as the homeliest persons have in daily use. What appears to me the grandest utterance that ever was put forth is to be found in the New Testament; and it must, as I think, be pronounced to be sublime—to be a very battery of words, even by those who do not believe the great truths which it contains. I speak of the following text from St Paul's Epistle to the Philippians:—

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Take this overwhelming sentence to pieces, and it will be found to consist of very common words, only one of which is of more than two syllables; but they are made to represent ideas which are barely within the scope of human faculties, and which cannot possibly be so comprehended by us as to make us feel in any degree familiar with them. Consequently, not sympathy but veneration is aroused

¹ The words—i.e., the sounds—are familiar; yet the ideas for which they stand may be obscure, terrible, and grand.

by them. The Persons named are also beyond our comprehension; so that we cannot, except in the most imperfect degree, sympathise with them, while their glory and power claim our humblest adoration. Thus the quotation possesses some of the known properties of the sublime, and nothing but what is sublime. Though we have it as a translation only, I cannot imagine that the original to Greek ears could possibly have been more impressive than our version is to us.

I cited this passage as an example of the wondrous power of simple words judiciously put together; but now that I am noting it, I find it hard to refrain from pointing out the rhetorical perfection of the climax which it exhibits. It begins with, in general terms, "hath highly exalted Him"; then goes on to, "hath given Him a name which is above every name"; rising higher now, it proclaims that at that name "every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth"; now higher still, that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord"; ending with the very grandest idea which can be presented to the mind—namely, "the glory of God the Father."

But it is preceded in the chapter by an anti-climax which is just as perfect, beginning with the equality of the Godhead, and stepping down to one of the greatest indignities conceivable—that is, the punishment by an ignominious death of a malefactor. The words are:—

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The descent is regular through-

out the figure, and between the beginning and end it is immense. Then follows the climax,—*"Wherefore God also,"* &c.,—which also covers an infinite distance of conditions, stretching from the death of the cross to the glory of God the Father!

I went a little out of my way to remark on the rhetorical perfection of the above passage, but now return to my argument, that its grandeur is in a high degree derived from the well-selected words in which the translators have thought proper to present it. I think, too, that an examination of any powerful passage in sacred or profane writing will elicit proof that much of the power is derived from the words employed.

The choice of words, then, since it counts for so much, should be made with much care. Of course, great words will not stand in place of great ideas; the attempt to make them do so produces bombast. But, granting that there are thoughts worthy of being communicated, it makes a vast difference in the reception of those thoughts by the reader or hearer, whether they are conveyed in the most fitting language or not. There are many compositions which are universally pronounced to be ingenious, original, true, sound, and even grand, which, nevertheless, never become to us more than highly esteemed acquaintances; they do not, for some reason or other, take hold of our hearts and minds, and make places for themselves in our memories. This, very probably, is because the honest writer or orator, solicitous only to deliver true and worthy matter, did not take sufficient heed of the vesture—to wit, the words—in which he would clothe it.

Again, there are composers who have not only choice thoughts to communicate, but who possess the

art of telling them in language so affecting that they make their way into our minds when they first present themselves, and are ever after cherished and adopted as well as approved. An author who can make his countrymen delight in his expressions as well as approve his thoughts, has reached the summit of his profession. There must be a great art in this, which some are lucky enough to discover, while others remain for ever ignorant of it. It is in vain that rules are from time to time invented; square and compass will not set bounds to a faculty which is, as Burke said of Taste, so delicate and aerial that it will not bear the chains of a definition. The best way to study it, as I should think, would be to examine with the utmost care the productions of those who have mastered this great art, and to look there diligently for the secret—*nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.*

It seems to me that there are two compositions in English which have, more than any others, fulfilled these requirements of not only presenting acceptable ideas, but of so presenting them that they fasten at once on the imagination and memory. These two are Shakspeare's "Hamlet" and Gray's "Elegy." The lines and phrases of these pieces have been picked out and hoarded by the public with such avidity that nine-tenths of them have become household words, and they are so familiar that they are passed from mouth to mouth and used incontinently by hundreds who know not whence they first proceeded. The works have attained, as I think, the highest triumph of authorship.

The mention of a triumph attracts me to another subject. We have enjoyed the honour of a visit from a delegation of Boers from the Transvaal, who have come to

London with the exquisite and original idea of dropping in *sans cérémonie* on the nation which they had first beaten and afterwards treated with domineering contempt. The lion-tamers have had no hesitation about entering the lair, so abject have the inmates become. Perhaps it is as well that lions should cease to lash their sides with their tails when they have forgotten how to use fangs and claws. Accordingly, we see the British Lion anxious for the smile of the enemies who treated us so cavalierly, and eating humble-pie greedily to convince our visitors that he likes it. But it seems to me that the proper settlement of our score with the Transvaal is only deferred; we are not all of us so callous as the Grand Old Man would have us to be.

Meanwhile a little farce has been acted at which many a one must have laughed consumedly. To employ British capital in mining and other enterprises in the Transvaal has been desired by certain speculators among us; and they, no doubt moved thereto by good reasons, took the liberty of inquiring of the delegates whether any property which British subjects might acquire in, or carry to, the Transvaal, and whether any ore which they might extract from the soil, would be secured to them by the laws of the land. The delegates were indignant that such a question should have been asked: of course everything would be secured by the laws of the land. I make bold to think, however, that the question was not altogether impertinent. It might be urged, in excuse for it, that the Transvaal Government had not scrupled to break a solemn convention almost before the ink with which it was written had dried; also that, with reference to the

same convention, they made the demarcation very indistinct between *mine* and *thine*. About the value of the Boers' answer there cannot, I think, be two opinions. Investors possess now the guarantee of this scrupulously honourable people for the safety of property and persons!

Our conduct towards the Boers has been, no doubt, entirely out of keeping with our traditions, and, as I believe, with our real national character. The nation cannot, in a few years, have utterly changed its sentiments, its beliefs, its characteristics and habits. I remember the excitement which occurred among us at the time of the Trent affair, some twenty years ago, when the nation would have taken, as one may say, the direction of affairs out of the hands of Ministers, for fear that a little of the point of honour should be surrendered. Before the news of the outrage could have reached London, a meeting had been held at Liverpool, and a deputation was on its way to press upon Lord Palmerston the expediency of dealing boldly with the matter, and of leaving no room for suspicion that we would abate one iota of what we considered to be our rights. The whole nation followed in the wake of Liverpool, and the temper of the people was unmistakable.

That was, I am certain, the spontaneous action of the country, and displayed our natural feeling. The exhibitions which we make of ourselves in the way of pocketing up wrongs and condemning ourselves are abnormal and exceptional,—vagaries executed during absence of mind—that is to say, while a large portion of our population are really intent upon other matters, and will not give their minds to matters not purely domestic. Foreign complications stand in the way of the home

questions which so many of us desire to solve; and so we, for the time, don't mind accepting a little dishonour, so that we may clear the board for those concerns about which we are anxious.

At the bottom of the present temper of the country is the idea, entertained by nine out of ten of our working population, that each person may be made rich (at any rate, raised far above a condition which can be called *poor*) by alterations of the laws and constitution. The great object, therefore, is to alter the laws, and foreign and colonial policy takes a low place in our regard. Everybody desires to have a voice in the alterations which are to be proposed. The new laws are to produce some marvellous beneficial effects; but what these effects are to be, or the exact course by which they are to come about, no man, I think, has attempted to explain. I quite believe that violent changes, regardless of equity, are intended, and that they will operate cruelly on certain persons or certain classes. I do not believe that they will have the effect of making any great number of persons richer, or of disseminating wealth. I go so far as to think that the changes will literally defeat the main object which their supporters have in view. Indeed I believe that even now, while the changes are unaccomplished, the shadow of them, cast before, is already operating to the material injury of that which they are intended to bring about. The vague dread and uncertainty caused by the anticipation of experimental and capricious innovations, are themselves a great drag upon enterprise. No man will work his best while he is under the apprehension (just or unjust) that the reward of his toil is not secure to him; and those are the conditions under which every man in

Great Britain who works at all is working now. The result *must* be a falling off in national wealth.

If the national wealth is falling off, how are large classes of the community to grow richer? The question is a hard one to answer if it has regard to permanent improvement. One class may temporarily enrich itself by seizing the property of another class; but this method does not tend to general improvement. And it is certain that, as the community grows poorer, every class of it must suffer.

Already, as I believe, the conviction has come upon some of the more thoughtful of the advocates of change, that political arrangements for making people richer will disappoint those who make them. This conviction may not have become prevalent as yet, but it is growing. On the other hand, it must be plain to everybody, that threatened speculative changes in the constitution of society paralyse effort, and so bring a blight upon all.

Of all modern expedients for reforming society—I assume that amelioration of some sort is the aim—the generous and indiscriminate appliance of dynamite to man and his works is the hardest to understand. Sages have fathomed the significance of some of the violences of nature; the thunder-bolt, the volcano, and the hurricane, destructive as they are, do not devastate in mere wantonness; there is a great and beneficent end to be effected after the outburst has passed. But no sage penetrates the explosive treatment from outside; and no philanthropist, who is free to pass behind the scenes, and who is cognisant of all parts of the great scheme, has helped us to the least comprehension of the manner in which explosions are to work together for

our ultimate benefit. We do not even with certainty know the source from which these costly and ingenious remedies are derived. At one time they are said to be *gages d'amitié* from Ireland; at another, tributes from anonymous friends in America: to-day they are of home conception and manufacture; yesterday we were thought to be indebted for them to Paris.

I confess to being quite in the dark as to the regenerate form in which surviving society is to emerge from the ordeal through which we are passing. We shall be saved so as by nitro-glycerine; but what will be our new condition? How shall we, or how shall any remnant of us, be improved by having our railway stations, our public buildings, our churches, and a few thousands of our population, blown to atoms? The old test-question—*cui bono?*—is altogether insufficient to obtain a solution of the problem. It may be supposed, by the ever-watchful detonators, that a period of wholesome terror may humble us, and prove us, and make us willing to recognise the surpassing merits of persons who ought to be eminent, but whom we, in our present arrogance, refuse to admire. But if this be the idea, it will probably turn out to be a mistaken one; for unless the nature of Englishmen shall be very much changed by manifold demolitions, they are more likely to repay these efforts with punishment—I would I could say with halts—than with anything else. Indeed I very much doubt whether, with all our present disposition to turn our cheeks to the smiter, to cherish them who despitefully use us, and to discourage quiet and law-abiding citizens, we would even modify an Act of Parliament or vote away the smallest sum of money in exchange for blowings-up.

We read that in the sporran of Rob Roy there was a small steel pistol fitted in such manner that it would be discharged, and the contents lodged in the rifler's body, if any one with a zeal which was not according to knowledge should attempt to undo the complicated fastenings. This he called the keeper of his privy purse. One quite understands why he resorted to this expedient, just as one knows why spring-guns used to be set with their wires obvious to the feet of poachers or burglars. The intention was to protect property. One knows, too, how in warfare there is very little hesitation about discharging a torpedo or an infernal machine so as to damage an enemy. But these things do not help us a bit in judging why villanous saltpetre should be digged out of the bowels of the harmless earth, or dynamite compounded, to destroy the bodies and the property of people who are not seeking to spoil any man's goods, and who have done nothing calculated to raise up for themselves deadly enemies.

To verify what my memory told me about that pistol of the M'Gregor, I just now took down a volume of Scott; and, as always happens with me when I approach that author, I could not close the book when I had found what I went to seek, but was allured by the old enchantment from page to page. It was like the accidental flavour of old racy wine to a palate that has been tortured by cheap Gladstone asperities, or the sight of an old master's painting offered to eyes that have been surfeited with raw pictures of yesterday. To me it is a marvel how a novel-reading people (as we have daily evidence that we may call ourselves) can ever let go their hold of such a writer as Scott. Yet I am told that we are doing so, and

that men and women are not ashamed to say that they find him tedious and old-fashioned. When such remarks can be ventured on, one justly dreads that a short day of notoriety is dawning for Bavius and Mævius. But surely it will be only a short eclipse for Scott, who was not for a generation nor for an age. His wonderful tales cannot really grow old, but must again be the mode before the world is much older.

About Scott's poems I give my opinion with some hesitation, knowing that he has never as a poet occupied that foremost place which has been accorded to him as a novelist. But I confess to having been as much delighted with his poetry as with any that I ever read. I do not know a more charming story, or one more charmingly told, than "*The Lady of the Lake*." His verse and his thoughts want polish, say the critics. Perhaps so; but if this be a serious defect, we must put down the father of poetry from his high place. But then I hear it said again that though ballad poetry may be grandly meritorious when written in the youth of a people, readers in an Augustan age demand a less rugged composition. There is no use in disputing about tastes; but I am prompt to say for myself that my emotions answer to Scott's touch, and I find but little to desire in the way of glamour when I am enticed within the charmed circle of his verse.

But I must put back Scott, collect my papers, and leave my desk. At last I am certain that I shall do no steady work to-night. I am tired of thinking. If any knights or dames should be still encircling my table round—and I think I hear occasionally a peal of merriment from thence—my idle hour shall be followed by a merry one.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE FANCY BALL.

"A freak took an ass in the head, and away he goes into the woods, masquerading up and down in a lion's skin."—L'ESTRANGE'S *Fables*.

"Him he knew well, and guessed that it was *she*,
But being masked, he was not sure ; —"

—SHAKESPEARE.

Good Mrs Dobb, standing in the doorway of her handsome drawing-room as the clock struck nine on Christmas Eve—they kept early hours in Clinkton—standing in the crimsonest of crimson satins, covered with the laciest of Brussels lace, with all her best ornaments finding niches somehow or other on the surface of her ample person, with her gloves on and her fan in hand,—was certainly not the least happy person at the prospect of her own ball.

Punctually at nine arrived the last detachment of the Tufnells, claiming the right which had been so carefully explained to Challoner ; and though with them, and with their sympathy, admiration, and expectation, began the evening's triumph, with them also came the first disappointment. They had not brought their man, their great Mr Challoner, who was to have taken such a prominent part in the evening's show,—for he was to have sat at Mrs Dobb's own table at supper, and to have gone in with the first batch of distinguished guests as soon as the dining-room door was open. Alack-a-day ! he was nowhere to be seen, and the sad truth about him was soon told.

"He had to go, Mrs Dobb ; he really *had* to go," said Mary. "He had to be off before we were out of bed in the morning, and goodness knows where he is by this time !"

"And was it not hard upon the poor dear," added her mother, "that it should have happened to-day of all days in the year ? Business is a nasty thing,—and so I always tell papa. If it had been to-morrow now,—but that is just like poor Jem's luck ; like enough it would have been to-morrow for any one who didn't care. And then Jem Challoner is so conscientious—really one may say too conscientious ; for, as I say to papa, one may be too conscientious about a thing of this sort. But papa, he could not see it ; he took me up quite short, and says he, 'Business is business. Jem Challoner is not such a ninny as to let any tom-foolery—ahem—hem—any pleasure like this interfere with duty.' Papa is such a one for duty, you know ; and he thinks all the world of Jem Challoner."

"Well, to be sure this is all very nice," added papa, for himself,—“very nice indeed,” benignantly ; “and Mrs Dobb is very kind to take so much trouble ; but a man of forty like Challoner——”

——“Do hear papa,” muttered Mary Tufnell aside to her sister. “Calling out for every one to hear. Man of forty, indeed ! Now it will be all over the town to-morrow. Cecy looked at me and laughed—she is laughing now !”

“What does it matter ?” argued Bertha, cheerfully ; “Cecy would take a man of fifty, and be thankful. Besides, we all know Jem's

age. Hasn't he lived here all his life?"

"They will think he was too old for dancing, and ran away from the ball."

"They will think nothing of the sort. However——Mrs Dobb," said Bertha loudly, "is it not hard lines upon poor Mary? And Jem had got such a lovely dress, a dress he could dance in——"

"Say costume," nudged her sister. "Don't you remember how he laughed at you for calling it his 'dress'?"

"All right—his costume, then. It had been sent in, Mrs Dobb, and was—sweet."

"Indeed! Now really, poor fellow! well, I am sorry, but we must all have something, Mary, my dear," continued the jolly hostess, recovering from her own share of vexation. "And don't you fret, but just be as merry as ever you can; be merry for two, you know, and that will be the best way of making up for Mr Jem's absence." Other arrivals then claimed her notice.

There is one excellent thing about a fancy ball,—conversation never flags; there is no need to have recourse to the weather, the heat of the rooms, the badness or goodness of the music: even the dullest need hardly be at a loss for a topic when on every side are motley figures and extraordinary devices; and how charming Mistress Mountebank looks in her powder! how quaint Master Scarecrow in his skins! what the judge has done with his wig; and how much the peasant has given for her shoe-buckles, will pass from lip to lip without an effort throughout the evening. Ere the rooms were half filled at Mrs Dobb's, the din and uproar was all that the heart of hostess could desire.

"And which is Miss Juliet Ap-

pleby, dear?" inquired Mrs Tufnell when a moment's peace was accorded from the incessant shaking of hands and receiving of congratulations. "Mrs Dobb, dear, where is Miss Juliet Appleby? I thought she was to have come with the Greens?"

"So she was. Ay, with the Greens, certainly."

"But the Greens came a quarter of an hour ago."

"And was Miss Appleby not with them?"

"Was she, though?"

"I can't say, I'm sure; I suppose she was. To tell the truth, Mrs Tufnell, I have not known who was who, or which was which, no, nor heard a word of what has been said to me this hour back. I just go on shaking hands with everybody. For, letting alone that it has been nothing but—'May I bring this one?' and 'Have you room for that one?' for days past, I should not know my own children if they appeared bedecked and bedizened as those people came up the stair just now. That I should not; Willie, nor none of them. I am bamboozled altogether by this time," laughing. "There may be a dozen Miss Applebys here, and I should not know one of 'em."

Mr Tufnell, on his part, was as curious as his wife. "Well, neighbour George," said he, facetiously alluding to the royal and gorgeous George IV. suit affected by his host the worthy Dobb,— "well, you have a wondrous sight of folks here to-night—Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, eh? Strikes me your girls and mine look as well as anybody. I have been poking about in all the corners while you were at your post outside, and, upon my word, I see no one who looks trigger than my Mary, in spite of Challoner's putting a stopper on the gewgaws. Look at that creature now,—that, I pre-

sume, is Miss Juliet Appleby, the Windlasses' fine lady——"

"That? No; that is Polly Beanfield, my wife's niece, as good a girl as ever lived, and looks first-rate, *I* think," rejoined Mr Dobb, somewhat shortly. "If girls are to trick out, what fault have you to find with her, eh? Shows her ankles, eh? No harm—no harm. Very good ankle, and knows it, the minx. You watch her dancing."

"To be sure,—to be sure," rejoined his friend, somewhat taken aback. "I—ah—I ought to have known it was Polly; of course I know Polly; I must speak to Polly by-and-by——"

——"There's a figure now. I don't like *that*, if you choose," proceeded his companion, softly. "There's a tippet concern. No better than a ballet-dancer—and nothing to excuse it. Who is she, I wonder? Cecy," beckoning to his daughter as she went by—"Cecy, who is that? What are you laughing at, girl?"

"At poor Mr Grumby in the corner; oh, papa, do look at him. He did not want to come, he hates the whole thing, and fought against it to the last; but Mrs Grumby would not let him off, and as she could not make him get anything for himself, she borrowed a suit for him; and look at it," in an ecstasy—"look at it. That petticoat of a tunic, inches below his knees, and the sleeves all over his hands, and the great crease across the back,—it must belong to a man three times his size. I must find out who the man is. And oh, papa, did you ever see any one so miserable and so conscious? See how he crouches and cowers in his corner! nothing will induce him to leave that corner; he thinks the flower-pots hide him. It is too much—oh, it is really too much!

We girls have been in perfect fits——"

——"Poor chap! he ought to put a bolder face upon it," rejoined her father, complacently. "There's no sense in showing everybody he's ashamed of himself. One should never do things by halves, eh, Tufnell? If one must be a fool,—for my part I feel as jolly as you please."

"What I say is, we are no worse than the London grandees going to a *levée*," said Tufnell. "I have seen them, and, 'pon my word, they looked very like you and me, Dobb, barring the wigs. Those they left to their coachmen."

"Does not papa look well, Mr Tufnell?" inquired papa's dutiful Cecy.

"Oh, oh, very fine, miss: you think so, do you? You first coax me into these fine feathers, and then stroke them down. That's the way with 'em all, isn't it, Tufnell?" and the two elderly gentlemen laughed in unison. "But I say, Cis, I say, who is that *ballet*-looking girl yonder?" continued her father, as the figure which had attracted his attention before, again came into view. "Eh? Who do you say? I can't hear."

"Hush, papa! take care. I have not a notion. Some one somebody brought with them——"

——"Miss Juliet Appleby, for a wager!" cried Tufnell.

"No, not her." Cecy shook her head. "Stay, I remember; she came with Mrs Poyntz—a Yorkshire girl. Mrs Poyntz wrote about her this morning."

"Then where in the name of wonder is this Miss Juliet?" demanded Mrs Tufnell, almost with vexation. "Is that her?" indicating a 'Folly' in bells; "or that?" pointing to a 'May Queen;' "or that?" turning again to a 'Red Riding-Hood.'

“‘Folly’ is Miss Smith; and the ‘May Queen’ is Chatty, our cousin Chatty; and I don’t know ‘Red Riding-Hood’s’ name, but she came with the Greens——”

“But she can’t be Miss Juliet Appleby?”

“Why not?”

“Miss Appleby! the fine Miss Appleby! the Windlasses’ smart young lady,—a little round-faced plump chit!” cried Tufnell, absurdly disappointed; for, to tell the truth, ‘Red Riding-Hood’ would have disarmed a heart of stone, and he had no mind to be disarmed. “I think you must be wrong, my dear Miss Cecy; I don’t think it can be as you say.”

“Well, I did not say anything, Mr Tufnell,—that is,” said Cecy, good-temperedly, “I told you that girl,” nodding, “came with the Greens; but whether she is Miss Appleby or not, I know no more than you do yourself.”

“She can’t be; she can never be,” muttered the banker.

“Ask Mrs Green. Here she comes. Mrs Green,” said Miss Dobb, running to her, “Mrs Green, do tell us who is your sweet little ‘Red Riding-Hood?’ Here is Mr Tufnell dying to know,” archly. “She came with you, and I am so stupid, I forget her name.”

“Little Nelly Burnaby, do you mean?” replied Mrs Green. “Oh yes, your good mamma kindly allowed me to bring Nelly, as we were disappointed at the last moment of the other young lady. I thought it a pity no one should have the treat, and poor Nelly was so pleased. She had a dress with her, as it happened, on the chance. Poor thing, it was a catch for her; ‘it’s an ill wind that blows nobody good.’ I wrote about it to your mamma this morning——”

“So you did, now I remember; but I said she came with you,

though I forgot the rest. Well, Mr Tufnell,—well, are you satisfied?”

“Oh dear me! you make me out very inquisitive,” said he. “You see, Mrs Green, when your dancing days are over, you have nothing to do but gape and stare; and as I know mostly all here, when I see a stranger I naturally want to hear who she is. You were saying your other young lady had disappointed you. The other young lady—ahem—was she,—I think I heard she was to be a Miss Appleby, or some such name; not that I know anything of any Miss Applebys: we have no Applebys about Clinkton, but——”

“But she doesn’t come from Clinkton, Mr Tufnell—she’s not a Clinkton person at all; only it happens that she is stopping in the neighbourhood, and it just came into my head one day when we were talking of the ball, it popped into my head to ask Mrs Dobb if I might take the liberty of bringing her——”

“But you *haven’t* brought her,”—there was an actual indignation in his tone,—“you haven’t brought her after all, it appears. She has shirked, eh? Thrown you over at the last moment, I suppose? Just like them, these fast fashionable young ladies; what do they care for our poor little attempts at gaiety? Not likely any one of them would put themselves about to——”

——“She is put about enough, poor thing, I can tell you,” cried Mrs Green, who in vain had essayed from time to time to be heard. “Laws, Mr Tufnell, that rosette should have been better sewn on,” stooping as she spoke to pick up a knot of gay-coloured ribbons which had fallen to the floor displaced by his vehemence. “See now, a mere stitch it is,” proceeded

the good lady, inspecting, "and a thread no stronger than a hair. Well, it's lucky I have a pin," producing one. "I told the girls pins would be needed; and though you are the first, Mr Tufnell, I'll answer for it you'll not be the last."

"Thankee, thankee," said Mr Tufnell, somewhat disconcerted; "that comes of bedizening one's self out in such rubbish—but it is safe enough now, I daresay. And—and what kept your young lady away, then, if I may make bold to ask? What is the reason of her not being with you after all?"

"Oh dear, such a sad pity it is, Mr Tufnell! and what poor Mr and Mrs Windlass will do I'm sure I cannot think, for they are getting to be old bodies now, and don't like to be put out of their way. And the poor thing herself, too, away from all her friends—well, I declare, there's Mary Philipson with a pair of men's boots on! Spurs and all! Mr Tufnell—look, Mr Tufnell," behind her fan, "did you ever see the like of that? Boots and spurs, coat and collar, and the little hat just over her ear! Well, it's a wonder she stopped short there; she might just as well have had the—ahem—bless me! I'm sure I hardly know which way to look."

"Oh, it's all right, ma'am, it's quite within the limits, I believe," rejoined Mr Tufnell, who had learned much within the last half-hour; "it took me rather aback, I own, at the first blush, but—well, well, we must not be too particular to-night. And to return to Miss Juliet Appleby——"

"And not a bit ashamed of herself!" murmured the lady, still dubiously scanning the gay *vivandière*, "skipping and twirling as bold as brass."

"Eh? What?" cried her companion, pricking up his ears. "As

bold as brass, did you say? Who's as bold as brass?"

"That flibbertigibbet Mary——"

"Oh," rejoined Mr Tufnell, disappointed,—“oh, I thought you were speaking of Miss Appleby.” The less he could hear about Miss Appleby, the more was his curiosity and suspicion aroused. "I thought you had meant that she was 'as bold as brass,'" he continued; "for really, you know, after all, you have not yet told me what is the matter with her."

"And I can't tell you; but I can tell you what *they say*: they say it's chicken-pox. Mrs Windlass writes this morning that she is all over in a rash, and sick, and pretty nearly off her head—at least, I may be mistaken, but that is what I gather from the note. And I know that the doctor—Dr Bell it is who attends the Windlasses; they think all the world of Dr Bell,—I know he was to have been here to-night, was he not, Cecy?" catching hold of Miss Cecily Dobb, who again came near, placing herself at the moment to take the lead in a sixteen set of Lancers which was being formed in front of the corner wherein the elderly pair were having their chat, and who now turned amiably round.

"What is it, Mrs Green?"

"Was not Dr Bell to be here to-night, Cecy?"

"Yes, and Mrs Bell; mamma asked them both," said Cecy.

"Ay, and Mrs Bell is here, for I saw her just now, all over spangles and gold lace. But you see the doctor is not come; he is at Windlass Court at this minute, or I'm mistaken. So, between ourselves, Mr Tufnell—between ourselves, I doubt if chicken-pox will cover it. We all know what's meant when there's any doubt about it's being chicken-pox, don't we?"

"Eh? What?" said the banker, staring.

"You know what's been going about?" in a whisper.

"Ah?" said he, interrogatively.

"That's it, then; that's what I mean. If it isn't *small-pox*, it's nothing."

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE MOTH RETURNS TO ITS CANDLE.

"But come what may, I do adore thee so,
That danger shall seem sport, and I will go."

—*Twelfth Night*.

As the evening wore on, Mary Tufnell began to enjoy her ball. She was a girl, it must be owned, who would have enjoyed anything, and been merry anywhere, provided that she had people to laugh with, and chaff with, and flirt—in moderation—with. To wear a new dress, and hear a ball-tune going, was more than enough to raise her spirits under the severest toothache or heartache she had ever known. And so, since there was no help for it, and she had been perforce deserted at a moment when such desertion was most inopportune, she soon began to feel that enough sighs had been expended, and that although the evening was shorn of its chief glory, there yet remained abundance of attraction.

It was something now to remember that Jem had never been enthusiastic on the subject; at the best, every one must have seen that for himself he did not care twopence about the great event of the day, but was going because *they* were going,—trying to like what Mary liked, and not to be bored by what gave her pleasure; and such being the case, and with the comfortable certainty that any annoyance the good kind fellow might now be feeling would be solely on her account, the philosophic maid soon picked up her spirits, and had scarce answered the last inquiry for an absent Jem, before she was promising this

waltz, and that galop, and all the "extras" to a present one.

"But Mary's flirtations are always so very open and above-board," said Cecily Dobb, who had eyes for all that went on. "Mary never does really flirt, you know, at all,—she would not know how if she tried; and that, I suppose, is the reason she has gone and engaged herself to that dreadful man Challoner. He would frighten any ordinary girl out of her senses, but Mary does not care how he looks at her. Do hear her rattling on now! *That's* not flirting. None of those Tufnell girls have the dreamiest idea of what flirting is," continued Miss Dobb, with conscious superiority.

The next minute it was, "Oh fie! you naughty creature, you! Now Mary, I'll tell. You throw over Captain James this very moment, and promise to have no more to do with him. What! you won't? Very well; very well. Papa is looking on, my dear. You know what he will say to you. Take care; beware, lady fair," laughing herself away.

But this was only Cecy Dobb's idea of being agreeable to her guests. "Mary likes to have it thought she is dangerous and mischievous," she said to herself; and as for the whole charge, it rested on absolutely no foundation; while even if it had, papa, who certainly might have objected to the sight of

the obnoxious uniform in conjunction with the nurse's black robe, was far too much engrossed otherwise to have perceived it.

This was his hour of relaxation and benignity, and surrounded as he was by mirth and jollity, by a motley crowd of people, who were not indeed for the most part strangers, but worse—old friends with new faces, asses in lions' skins, pussies in boots—it was too much to expect that he should have time or attention for anything but discoveries. Having satisfied his curiosity on the score of Miss Juliet Appleby, he now willingly subsided into the pleased and amused spectator.

Mrs Tufnell also had her hands full. She was perpetually being addressed by familiar voices proceeding from unfamiliar lips; she heard the delighted laugh at her expense; she had to own to her bewilderment, then to excuse it, then to join in merriment over it, then to retail it; she had to eat ices and drink champagne, to take care that she spilt nothing over her fine dress, to steal a sly peep at her head in the glass when a chance offered—to take a turn now and again round the rooms, to admire the hangings and wonder at the space, and consider if she could do anything of the kind herself, supposing papa could be brought over to it; and lastly, she had to make herself agreeable to the portly uncle of her hostess, who had come from Manchester on purpose to grace, by his august presence, the festivity, and who was elected to the honour of escorting Mrs Dobb's chief friend to the supper-table.

Thus for the worthy dame. Of the rest of our party, all that remains to be said is that Emily quite satisfied Herbert in her "Dolly Varden," and Bertha ad-

mired herself in a richer costume. No one was able to find any fault either with their entertainers or entertainment; and, indeed, when all was said and done, and danced and eaten, the only shame was, according to the banker's soft-hearted wife, that nobody had thought more about that poor dear who had been done out of it all.

How the poor dear bore his disappointment, and what he was about during the gay hours when the Clinkton fiddlers were fiddling and the Clinkton exquisites were footing it on the floor, may now be told.

The light was just beginning to wane when the train from London, which Challoner had been able by good luck and punctuality to catch, drew up at the station for Overton; but even before it stopped, his eye caught the glitter of silver-tipped harness on the back of a restive horse, and of the light-blue livery of Lord Overton's groom bending forward from the dogcart, soothing and managing.

No one else had come to meet him, but the man was charged with excuses. Mr Edward was so extremely busy he could not find the time,—this was the correct message,—but something else was added with a twinkle of the eye, which showed how well William understood the ways of his betters. "It was her ladyship who dissuaded Mr Edward, sir, the roads being so bad with the frost, and the mare only roughed this morning. She has not been out these three days, sir, that's what makes her cheerful like. Wo-ho, Jenny, then! Mr Edward do go it when he comes this station-road, sir; he likes to come in with a dash; and in weather like this, there's no saying——" and he shook his head.

"All well?" said Mr Challoner, presently.

"All quite well, sir. There's skating on the ponds to-night, sir."

"I suppose so. The night looks well, too. The frost holds firm, I see."

"Never saw it holding faster, sir. His lordship is a rare good skater, Mr Challoner," continued the man, who was quite at home with Mr Challoner and full of his subject. "His lordship is better than Mr Edward, although Mr Edward flies about all over the place. Both our gentlemen were out last night, sir."

"Was—ah—any one else out?"

"No, sir; I think not, sir. There is no one else at the Hall just now, sir. I think I heard her ladyship was going to-night, though; Charles thought he heard so, at least. Her ladyship does go out occasionally, but she has not been this frost."

"Not at all?"

"Not by night, sir."

"She is waiting for me," said Challoner to himself; "she promised that she would, and she has kept her word. Well, I have kept mine: here I am. She has but to send for me, and I am at her service. She has never yet found me remiss,—I wonder if she ever will."

It seemed as though he had been years away, as one object after another, each bringing up some remembrance, trifling enough in itself, but inexpressibly dear to his impassioned and excited memory, now rose to view. Here they were at the cross-roads. There was the broad row of beeches to the left; there the little wayside inn. What a brawling the half-frozen brook made below the bridge!—that brook, whose treacherous banks had once given way when he and Teddy and Matilda were

hunting ferns that grew among the nooks and cliffs. He had held his fair companion up, and she had had to cling to him, even while making light of a possible catastrophe. But she had worn a tuft of the ferns, which had like to have cost so dear, as a shoulder-knot that evening.

Then here was the stile whereon his lady had so often rested while her escort gave the dogs their dip, and from which she had once fallen—yes, absolutely fallen—until her other brother most luckily caught her in his arms, so startled was she by his surprising her once when thus left alone. It was only Overton—the quiet, peaceable Overton—who had thus broken in upon his sister's reverie; but so lost had she been in musings that she had shrieked aloud, and Overton's laugh had rung through the woods. What had she been thinking of?

He was nearly as fully occupied by inward reflections himself, when they came to the last turning of the avenue, and had the first sight of the Hall.

That, however, brought him back to the present. In another few minutes he would be there; he would be running up the front steps, he meeting Teddy—always first—be seeing Overton in the background, and another figure behind him——No; they were *here*! "Halloo! halloo!" he was hailed as he passed.

"Stop, and let me out," said Mr Challoner, very quietly. "Take on my things, will you? I see—Mr Edward—in the garden."

"Here you are! here you are!" cried Teddy's joyous voice from the shrubs. "How are you?" vaulting over the low gate between them. "How *are* you? Awfully glad you could come. But I said I knew you would come if you could. I was too busy to come to

the station. I have only just met Matilda here. We were looking out for you."

"How do you do?" Lady Matilda had at last succeeded in opening the gate for herself, and came forward to do her part. "How do you do?" she said in rather a low voice, and left all further inquiries and welcome to her brother.

"Deadly cold journey you must have had," said he. "I would not have set foot in a train to-day for any money. Beastly things at the best of times; and on a day like this, when every time the door opens it lets in a gale of wind that cuts like a knife—woo—ogh!" with a shudder.

"We had better come in and have some tea," said Matilda.

"Why, it's not time for it yet," exclaimed Teddy. "What do you want tea so soon for? Oh, for Challoner, of course. I beg your pardon, Challoner; what an ass I am! But I forgot, and it is so early. Come in, of course. Matilda and I were just taking a turn round the garden, but we'll come in now."

"Don't come in for me."

"Oh, you won't care to stop out."

"But I do. I should prefer it."

"You must be cold, or something."

"I am perfectly warm—hot; I don't want to go in at all."

"Not for tea?"

"Not for any amount of tea. If Lady Matilda"—he was walking along by her side,—"*if* Lady Matilda—unless she—provided she does not—does not mind."

Lady Matilda did not mind at all—had no wishes—and quite preferred—anything. In short, was to the full as coherent and sensible as he.

Should they go up the laurustinus walk? The laurustinus was in blossom, and not affected even by

such a frost. It was several years since there had been such a frost.

Then Teddy broke in afresh. "Won't we have a night of it? The ice is as smooth as a mill-pond, and we have had every leaf and twig picked off by the boys. We made the little beggars work; they broomed away like anything at the last. And we have got such a fireplace, Challoner,—you should see our fireplace; it's all bricked in; and Matilda is sending down kettles, and pots, and pans, and all kinds of things."

"You are going yourself?" inquired Challoner, looking straight in front of him, but there was no doubt as to whom the "you" was meant for.

"I—I think so."

"Going? Of course she's going: what is to hinder her?" cried Teddy. "We have been polishing up her skates, and oiling her straps; and, I say, I have got such a pair of beauties. I wish,"—stopping short—"I say, I wish you would come in and see them."

"Thanks; presently. Are they like mine, I wonder? I must get mine out and give a look to them before dinner. I have not had them on yet, but——"

—"Not had them on yet! Why, we have had two good days, and I made sure that you up in the north——have you not been on at all yet?"

"Not at all."

"Weren't they a skating lot you were with?"

"They were full of something else."

"By Jove! and skating in the question! Hang me if I would let *anything* else get in my way if there was ice to be had! Where did you get your skates? Are they new ones?" He was well off the awkward topic after his own easy fashion.

"I took them out of a shop—

window," said Challoner, carelessly. "They are not much, probably, but I took a fancy to them, and, as it happened, they were just my fit. I had no time to get my own from town, after receiving your brother's letter."

"No, we did not give you much time; but then we had to wait to see what the frost was going to do. It would have made us look rather small, if, after we had got you to come, there had been nothing to come for. Overton said he would not have you written to till yesterday. We half expected you yesterday, but I suppose you did not get Overton's letter in time?"

"I could not come yesterday, much," said Challoner, earnestly, "much as I should have liked it. But I was staying with people. I could not leave them on quite so short a notice. As it was, I had to take something very like French leave,—you got my telegram all right, I suppose?" suddenly.

"Got it yesterday afternoon."

"Ay, I sent it about three o'clock. Was it here by four?"

"Was it, Matilda? But I forgot, you were over at Endhill, and I was out too. You see we did not know when it might come, and we were half expecting you yourself, so I went to see that the ponds were all right, and Matilda to knock off the Endhills. She gets into scrapes if she——"

"And you had a good evening's work last night?" said Challoner, who interrupted on purpose, knowing that Matilda would be grateful.

"Good? Good was not the word. It was glorious; I never saw it better; I wish you had been with us. There was such a jolly moon—but it will be still better to-night."

"I thought of you. I guessed what you would be doing. I knew Lady Matilda was longing for a frost——"

——"So were we all."

"And I wished I had been here to buckle on her skates for her."

"Well, you can to-night," said Teddy, with philosophical resignation of the envied post. This was a privilege he could bear to yield, he thought. Putting on other people's skates is not seductive to the fraternal mind.

Still Matilda kept silence. "Did you go?" said Challoner, turning at length direct to her.

And then, as he waited for a reply, and there was no avoidance of it, and Teddy had run on, and was calling loudly to his dog, in the silence and shade of the deepest part of the garden, she had to answer "No."

. . . They did not go in for some time after that. They sauntered up and down the crisp paths, and soon the last red streak of sun died out of the sky over the fir tops, and one little star after another came twinkling into view,—and even then, instead of seeking shelter within doors, the three wandered off to the farm, and Challoner was shown the latest acquisitions there; and Matilda would have him to the cow-house to see how much her little heifer had grown in his three weeks' absence, and then to the piggeries, to watch the evening meal—the steaming buckets and pails emptied into the big troughs, soon beset by hungry applicants—while all the while great empty waggons kept rumbling into the yard, from taking turnips to the frost-bound sheep in the fields,—and hens roosted, and geese and ducks clustered closer and closer together in their snug quarters for the night.

There was a rich unctuous odour pervading all; there was

a warmth and comfort and plenty and peace about the old farm-yard that went straight home to Challoner's country heart; and the contrast which the present congenial company and surroundings presented to the distasteful, and too often absolutely repugnant scenes so recently quitted, transformed him so fully for the time, made him so absolutely another being, that those who had only

known the unfortunate lover under other auspices would hardly have recognised the man. His eyes burned, his cheek glowed, he talked, laughed, jested, lingered,—and although, ever since he had originally yielded to the dear delights of Overton, he had been seen to advantage there, he had never before, in his mistress's eyes, seemed so worth the winning, and so entirely won.

CHAPTER XXVII.—ALL FORGOTTEN BUT THE PRESENT.

"Thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain."

—SHELLEY.

And now for the evening, the delightful evening, which had been bought at so dear a price, and for which Challoner now prepared in a tumult of disordered and exultant feeling to which every trifling incident and association ministered.

He was here again, actually, incredibly here again; that was first and last and everything for the moment. He had never really meant to come; no, certainly he had never meant it, not during this past fortnight at least—not since he had sat in Mr Tufnell's little room, and heard him talk of Mary, and realised with an awful blinding glare of realisation, that he had only been playing at freedom and folly and happiness, and that he was in actual deed a fettered, doomed captive. That half-hour, following up the previous half awakement, had for a while forced him back from the flowery forbidden path to the hard, straight, dry road; but he had found that road too barren for mortal man—or so he told himself—and the result was, Hurrah for Overton! beautiful, bewitching Overton! Every obstacle had been surmounted,

every scruple and misgiving flung to the winds, and he was here—here at last.

He looked about him with kindling ecstasy when at length he was alone, and could draw a breath and estimate his bliss. They had given him his own old room, and as he drew aside the curtain and pulled up the blind, eager to gaze once more across the broad expanse of snowy upland, the moon rising full and bright, illumined nearly every part of the old-fashioned chamber, lit up the faded hangings of the bed, and irradiated the prints on the wall. How well he knew every face and form in those prints! He had had time enough to study them inch by inch, and to be sick to death of one and all during those five days when he had been condemned to lie in bed fretfully staring at any object which was in front of him; he had hated each severally more than the other, as each in turn engaged his irritated attention,—but now, now they came back to him as ancient enemies turned into beloved friends, chosen welcome associates. The wall-paper, the bookcases, the huge

cumbrous arm - chairs, the very brass fender and fire-irons that used to be such nuisances, always clattering down and making his head ache when any one touched them, and the legs of the writing-table, that got into one's way at every turn, now seemed to wonder that he could ever have regarded them with any but the kindest eye. The blotting-book! But no, it had ever been a fiend; no, it remained so; he drew the line there—he could not love it yet. But he would not write to Mary on this visit at all events: he was only here for such a very short time. Of course he could not tell precisely how long, but any way he should not think about it for the next day or two. Let the future be gone on this night of nights; for the present he was in paradise, and he would not mar his paradise, no, not even in thought.

And Matilda was alone when he went down-stairs presently, and he walked straight up to her in the firelight, and perhaps he told her then—but no matter, they were not talking at all when the brothers came in, but were standing mutely together on the hearth-rug, nor did either pay any special heed to the remarks of the new-comers, while Matilda took to busily placing with her own hands great logs of wood on the fire; and Challoner, watching silently, seemed to forget to help her.

They woke up by-and-by, however, and were heard lightly laughing as they led the way into the dining-room; and the dinner-table was bedecked for Christmas Eve with holly and laurstinus, and a sly branch of misletoe, which no one saw of course, and which two people at least could have done without. But nothing could come much amiss on such a night. Even

a servant's stupidity must be condoned,—poor simple soul, he meant it well—and after all, what was it? By nine o'clock the moon was at her height; and though a few fleecy clouds were scattered here and there beneath the brilliant firmament, they scarce stirred in the still atmosphere, and cast no shadow anywhere. The ponds on which the ice had been guarded and tended were about half a mile from the house, on the edge of a long low wood, one bank being nearly on a level with the water, the other sloping swiftly upwards. Three good-sized pools ran into one another almost in a direct line; and a couple of islands near the centre of the largest seemed to cut it in two, and turn the three into four. It was on one of these islets that the brick fireplace had been constructed under Teddy's auspices; and as the time for using it arrived, a fire was lit, and two or three servants were despatched from the Hall, bearing kettles, cans, pots, and other necessities.

It was explained to Challoner that it was not entirely on their own account that so much preparation was made.

"You must know," said Lady Matilda, "that from time immemorial (that means since *I* came back and made them do it) Over-ton ponds have been free to all when the ice bears (they are free, for that matter, when it does not), only we make this proviso, like the Cornish clergyman among the wreckers, that we 'get down, and all start fair.' We never really kept any one off till last night; but—we did last night."

"We did," said Teddy. "By Jove! we had to keep our eyes open, too. The ice would have been murdered."

"How did you manage it?"

"Oh, we had it given out that there were to be cakes and ale to-night, and every one who put in an appearance yesterday was caught by Charles. I say, look at the kettles. Matilda, I should hope you have enough kettles, at all events."

"Mrs Wadden herself bustled up to my door just now to ask at what hour she should send the second supplies."

"What do the supplies consist of?" inquired Challoner.

"Hot-pot, sausages, plum-pudding, roast potatoes. Overton skating is very popular, Mr Challoner."

"I have no doubt it is, Lady Matilda."

Challoner's skates were not so perfect in their mechanism as Teddy's; but when it was understood that they were the best he could get, and that his own were better, but were uncome-at-able on the short notice given, all were ready to find that they would do what was wanted, and that too superior skates often resulted in no skating. For instance, even Teddy's latest acquisitions, new, glossy, and spotless,—would they work as well as Overton's, which had seen many a winter? Teddy had a business with the joints, to begin with; and although he was very anxious to display the working and prove their perfection, and though every one was willing to believe and ready to agree, his brother had perhaps a shade more confidence in his time-worn couple.

Then the little pair came under notice, and Challoner took them at once into his keeping, making fast the buckles across his arm, and jingling his own, as though he liked to hear the two in each other's company. He had a gimlet; he did not need to have one hunted out for him.

"Well, you *are* a fellow," cried Teddy. "You have everything. How on earth did you remember to bring a gimlet?"

"I knew we should want them."

"Want them? Of course. But we have lots."

"There are never too many. While you are putting on your skates, I might wish to be putting on—your sister's."

"Not your own, of course. And did you get the gimlet at Clinkton too?"

"Yes." But he wished they had not known the name of Clinkton so well. It almost made him start when now and again Teddy—for it was always Teddy—would burst out with Clinkton something or other; he could not help feeling that if—or when the news should come, the very sound of Clinkton would bring with it a terrible conviction. He put on his thick great-coat again, thoughtfully.

But thoughtfulness wore off,—everything wore off except joyous anticipation and exhilaration as the quartet set forth, Challoner with the lady in front, the brothers' cigars obliging them to keep a pace behind. "Just for look's sake, not because Matilda minds," explained Teddy. "It does not do for people to see," he added.

Challoner agreed, and would himself smoke—presently.

The crisp snow crackled beneath their feet as they left the path and crossed the grass towards the wood; and a very short time enabled the party to come within sight of their destination.

"Lots of people there," cried Teddy. "I say, are they on?" sharply. "No; it is only the servants crossing back and forwards to the fire. Oh, I say, look at the fire! And look at the black figures round it! Do you see them, Challoner?" calling to him.

"Do you see the cannibals dancing round the blaze? Eh? Aren't they like that? Here are some more coming along behind us," turning his head. "Who can they be, I wonder? Three,—four,—four people. Oh, and I see a lot more down there, along the Seaborough road."

"Don't speak so loud," his brother reminded him; "you forget how far the voice is carried on a night like this."

"They are far enough away. Who can they be? Matilda," running on to her—"Matilda, who can those people be? There are two ladies. It can't be the Applebys?"

Challoner's heart jumped.

"The Applebys? No; I hardly think so," replied Matilda, all unconscious. "They would not come without our sending word."

"And did you not send word?"

"Oh, never mind, Teddy, I——"

—"Do you mean to say you did not send them word?" he was pressing on by her side. "Well, I never—I thought, of course, you would send to them the first thing."

"What for? They are away,—some of them at least are away. Juliet——"

—"She was to come back to-day: you know that quite well."

("Then how could she be at the Clinkton ball?" thought Challoner.)

"She was not indeed, Teddy: that is to say, I—I am *quite sure* she was not."

"How can you be sure? I am not sure, and I know at least as much about the Applebys as you do. It was either to-day or to-morrow she was to come——"

—"Well, it was to-morrow then."

"It was nothing of the sort. Oh, it was too bad of you not to send. They will be awfully hurt.

They always ask us whenever they have anything, and we have always asked them too, before,—always. Why did you not do it?"

Matilda did not know—did not think—did not really feel at all sure that it would have been—have been of any use. Marion had a cold——

—"Last Sunday!" cried her brother. "Nearly a week ago!"

"It is not likely she would be fit to come out at night yet."

"You might have given her the option."

"And Juliet away."

"She is not away, I tell you. She is back to-day, and we must get her somehow. I wonder what we ought to do. It is not too late to send yet."

"Oh, it is; much, *much* too late."

"Charles would be there in twenty minutes."

"He would not be there under half an hour; certainly not under half an hour. I should say three-quarters, even by the short cut."

"Well, there would still be time."

"Oh, Teddy, don't. Do let it be as it is. Do let us be content with those we have. There are plenty here," pleaded she; "why should we always have the Applebys?" ("Ay, why indeed?" thought Challoner.) "The Applebys are all very well," continued the speaker; "but Applebys year after year, morning, noon, and night, *jours* Applebys—I am beginning to be tired of it," cried Lady Matilda, with sudden petulance. "Do, for mercy's sake, let us have one evening, one single solitary evening, without the Applebys."

"Well, I call it deuced unkind," muttered Teddy. But Challoner was smiling.

"Robert was quite concerned at my coming out to-night;" there had been a full minute's pause,

during which the last subject was felt to be quite done away with, and Lady Matilda had slipped her hand, by way of making friends, under her ill-used brother's arm. There had been a brisk advance for some paces, ere she resumed, in a fresh tone suited to a fresh topic, "Robert was not at all sure about it, I can tell you. He thought the whole thing—ah—'imprudent'; had he spoken the word that was in his heart, he would have said 'uncivilised.' I was over there yesterday, and he had heard, as he always does hear, of our intentions."

"They will not be here to-night, then?"

"They? Robert and Lotta? Robert turn out at this unearthly hour, after he has arrayed himself in his evening clothes, and brushed up his evening hair,—and Lotta lay aside her hemming and stitching, her fifteenth tuck that she is putting into baby's frock? And how could they leave the house, you know? Oh, you have no idea what an affair of state it is when the house has got to be left on the occasion of a dinner-party, or some such festivity of sufficient importance! Robert will explain to you with pleasure, if you ask him, the nature of the precautions taken: how this door is barred, and that bolted, and how all the maids sit up; and I am not sure if the baby is not exhibited at each of the windows in turn, by way of scaring the midnight robber. But as for entering into all these solemn arrangements for anything short of a real, actual, tangible dinner-party, as for doing anything of the kind for a mere piece of child's-play like this,—oh, you surely do not suppose my sensible son-in-law capable of such frivolity."

"And I don't believe he can skate a hang," added Teddy.

They had now reached the ponds, round whom a considerable number of expectant people had collected, and all the regret of young Lessingham for the missing Applebys instantly vanished on finding their places so well supplied. "Mrs Barnes, you here!" he cried, joyously, to a farmer's rotund dame, who, warmly wrapped and muffled, had come, nothing loath, to see the sport; "and Barnes is getting on his skates. Holloa! Johnson, I haven't seen you since last frost, I believe. You came down on purpose? That's right. Fine night, Jem. The ice is first-rate. Matilda," coming back to her, "I say, Matilda, there are the Miss Robinsons; do go and speak to them. They are huddling together over there, and I daresay they don't know whether to begin or not. You had better go before you get on your skates; they will take it civil. Challoner, come along and see the fire. Who is that Overton has got hold of? Oh, the rector. Oh, come, let us shake hands with the rector. Awfully glad to see you, sir; the ice is splendid: I shall look you up presently to join in some things. Now, then, Challoner,—oh, here come the Livingstons, I'll bet anything"—staring hard—"I'll bet any money that's the Livingston girls getting over the fence now. They are from Seaborough, that lot." Aside: "Matilda will not be over glad to see them; and between you and me, it is rather cheeky. They are the hotel-keeper's daughters, you know,—that big hotel at this end of the town. They had better have gone somewhere nearer there; but I hope Matilda won't be bad to them. The poor girls like the fun, I suppose; and they are go-ahead skaters, though Matilda says they do it vulgarly. They do sprawl about rather; and you should have seen how one of them went on last

year. That's the little girl who was with them then, I do believe," watching intently. "Yes, I do believe it is; and she could hardly put one foot in front of another! Well, I hope she has improved. Oh, by Jove! here are the Germans. Oh, now you will see some fun. Hie! Mr Müller, this is the best way," taking off his cap politely; "let me help Mrs Müller down the bank. There are some benches along this way, and we have put down a piece of carpet. My sister is here herself to-night. She will be on directly."

"It is so very kind to have such nice place kept," replied the German, gratefully. "Mrs Müller and myself we cannot refrain to come. We have walk all the distance. What a beautiful night!"

"And you should see that little woman going it!" said Teddy, turning back to Challoner. "They have walked here, walked over two miles, and she will skate all night, and walk back again, and think nothing of it. She skates like anything,—out and out the best woman here. I say, we may as well go on now; there is no need to wait longer: I can keep a look-out if any more come. Let us go to that bench."

"I am waiting to help your sister."

"What is she about? Where has she gone?"

"To the islands. She crossed a few minutes ago: there she is now, between us and the fire."

"Ay, seeing to things. Perhaps some of the folks would like a cup of tea or coffee before they begin. The Müllers would, I am sure. I will tell Matilda——"

"I will tell her," said Challoner. "They are waiting for you to take the lead on the ice. Look, all those people are ready, but they don't like to take it on themselves to

start. You fire away, like a good fellow, and I will look after the coffee."

"We may begin now, I think," said Lord Overton, coming up at the moment. "Where's the gimlet, Ted?"

"Well, I'm using it," said Teddy.

"Here is mine," said Challoner. "I am going to hand round cups for Lady Matilda;" and he departed.

Matilda, bright and busy as the rest, made him useful at once. She was having eatables and drinkables handed round for all who chose, and many non-performers, who had been standing about for some little time, now gathered round and received steaming cups with due appreciation. Into the middle of this row presently darted Teddy with a fresh idea.

"Have you seen the slide? It is in that corner. We have given them up that corner, or else they would be a perfect nuisance, sliding about everywhere. Hie! all of you who want to slide, there's the place."

"I'll start them!" cried Challoner, and went down the slide like a schoolboy.

It was not till the sport was in full swing that Matilda had, to all appearance, time for more than a passing command for her knight. She was too intent on hospitality, too desirous of fulfilling her duties, too industrious; but the time came at last.

I will not say that longer was taken than needed to put on those pretty little skates, since every one knows that one cannot be too careful on such a point, and that the slightest carelessness may give rise to an accident; but undoubtedly no one could have accused Mr Challoner of hurrying over his task. And since, after all, the great thing is to take pains and do the thing well, regardless of time or

trouble, why suggest that he might have been a trifle quicker in his movements? He was sharp enough about putting on his own. New as they were to him, he had them adjusted in a trice, and was off, and by Matilda's side ere she had been twice round the ponds; and, truth to tell, from that moment they were seldom apart for the remainder of the evening.

Happily he was not enough of a proficient to be of value to the brothers, who were performing feats in company with the rector, and who had at least the merit of doing what they did with skill and grace, and of not attempting more than they could accomplish. Challoner found Lady Matilda's powers, he vowed, quite enough for him. Figures she did not attempt; but with what marvellous ease and delicacy of motion she glided hither and thither,—how quietly, with what elegance!

"Why, yes," said Overton, to whom a remark was hazarded; "yes, Matilda skates like a lady. I like it myself; but she cannot *do* anything, you know—she cannot even go backwards. There is little Mrs Müller—I wish you had been over there just now, she was making circles most wonderfully, most beautifully,"—the quiet Overton was quite warm; "I have never seen anything more perfect," he ran on enthusiastically. "And her long backward curve, it is something to watch. Her husband is the queerest object. Look, there he goes. Round and round like a mad creature. Did you ever see such a swing as he has got on now? If he came across anything in the shadow over there, it would be a bad look-out. Always one foot high in front of the other: and those turned-up skates! There he goes—there he goes. Have you noticed him? But he enjoys himself, and that is everything. As

for his wife, it is a treat to see her."

"Is that Mrs Müller you are speaking of?" said Teddy, joining them. Matilda had sat down for a moment. "Mrs Müller is in first-rate form to-night. I have been going round with her; did you see us? We passed you and Matilda just now," to Challoner.

"Your sister's skating is perfect, to my mind," said Challoner. He felt as if he must say it.

"Matilda? Oh, she goes neatly enough. She ought to strike out more though; she ought to get on more swing——"

—"She would spoil all if she did. Look at her now," as the slight dark figure was seen gliding towards them; "there is not a movement perceptible, she seems to float, to steal along involuntarily; it is the very poetry of motion,"—he stopped, deeply colouring in the darkness, and wishing he had held his tongue; the words had burned his lips. But whether or not any one else noticed, he could not tell; they both turned to Matilda, and she was herself the one to speak.

"Do you hear the bells? Listen to the bells. Had it not been for this calm still night they would not have been carried so far as here. Hark! how loud and sweet they sound!"

"They are from Westland, Lady Matilda," said the rector, coming up. "There are two more bells added to the peal, and that is how you notice them. I don't think I ever remember hearing the chime before from the ponds."

"They are in honour of Challoner," said Teddy, with a laugh. Everything, he vowed, was in honour of Challoner. On his account the ice was better, the night was brighter, the people merrier, the attendance larger, and the sport kept up later, than it had ever been before. But for him the evening

would never have been half what it was. If he had not come, it would have spoilt all.

"Yes, indeed, Mr Challoner is very lucky," began the rector.

But his young friend laughed again. "It is *we*, not *he*—*we* are lucky. We just hit him off—sent for him at the right moment, and scored A 1," cried the young man, wheeling round and round the circle in little flights of exultation. "Now you see how neat the whole thing was, and what jolly fun we are having. Could anything be better? We have nothing left to wish for——"

—"Not even the Applebys?" from Matilda.

"Bother the Applebys!" cried Teddy, quite heartily.

And how did Challoner feel under such heartiness, such warmth? It needed all his recklessness, all his effrontery, and all his passion to master at moments like this the desperate sense of shame and self-loathing evoked by the unwitting tormentor; it needed all the fumes of a new intoxication to stifle the baleful remembrance. He would have to go off alone with Matilda, to listen and look, and stun again with such narcotics the throbbing reawakened nerve; and he did. And then——, he was laughing more gaily, striking out more boldly, to all appearance enjoying the scene more thoroughly, than any.

At length the feast and the fray alike drew near an end. People cannot absolutely skate on for ever; and though it might have seemed as though the charming Mrs Müller would never have tired making more and more faultless curves, and as if the Miss Livingstons were inexhaustible in their wild excursions—while the timid were growing ever more venturesome, and the stately had unbent, and the bystanders had disappeared, and none remained but the hardy

and the indefatigable,—the time at length did come when even these proved themselves human.

Challoner, who had been despatched to attend to some of the departures, returned to find Matilda quietly resting on a fallen tree by the side.

"You are tired at last?" he said, sitting down beside her.

"Tired at last. Yet as long as I was on the wing, I really could not have supposed it. It is only when one sits down that one feels it a little difficult to get up again."

"I hope you have not done too much?"

"You shall see. To-morrow I will do it all over again."

"To-morrow?" said Challoner, dreamily—"To-morrow?"

He did not feel, he *knew*, that there would never be such a to-morrow for him. A cold touch seemed to be laid on his heart—a deadly chill, a mocking foreboding. No; whatever the morrow might bring of good or evil, he should never again, by Matilda's side, skim the frozen pools of Overton Hall; never again——

"Did you speak?" he said, hurriedly.

She had: had inquired the hour, had remarked upon the gradual lessening of their number, on several other things; and he had heard as though he heard not, but had at length burst forth into one long, deep, irrepressible sigh, so spontaneous, so sad, so full of tender significance, that now, feeling the moment almost too much for her, and at a loss how to bear her part in it, she was begging him to rise and lend his aid in enabling her to do the same. From the lowness of her seat she was unable to get up without a helping hand; and as she spoke she put out her own.

Challoner, still half asleep, held it—hung over it—kissed it. He scarcely knew what he was doing;

that is all that can be said for him. He had a dim idea of taking leave of some fair scene, and of letting it go with a dull anguish which the presumptuous deed would soothe. It was not until aroused by the hasty withdrawal—or would-be withdrawal—of the little outraged member, and by the movement, which could be but a movement—for she could not really stir or turn, so unfortunately happy had been the moment chosen,—it was not until then, that he started to feel how deeply he had plunged. That sense was all that was needed. Like a spur, it drove him on. Again he caught the hand; how soft and warm it felt—bare, gloveless—between his! he held it fast, and lifted his head with sullen determination.

"I shall not let this go," he said.
"I—can't. See now, I——"

"Here they are! here they are!" cried a jubilant voice, as Teddy, radiant as ever, emerged from the darkness. "We thought you had given us the slip, you two; and Overton and I were just going off, when I said I would take one more look round. You had hid yourselves pretty nicely, I must say—right in the shadow over here. Well, now, are you ready to come?"

Challoner was already raising his

companion, and steadying her on the glassy surface.

"I suppose they are all gone?" he said.

"Every man-Jack of them, Livingstons and all. They were the last. They want to come to-morrow," with a slight air of apprehension.

No response.

"I say, Matilda, the Livingstons want to come to-morrow."

But still he met with no answer, no objection, no demur. It seemed as if either Challoner's dim foreboding of "to-morrow" had fallen on Matilda also, or that she could not see, nor think, nor feel beyond to-night. She was wondering, almost weeping,—and all the time he was holding her hand.

Thus, under cover of the night, they crossed the ice together; and as he knelt before her ere they quitted the spot, performing again the service so delightful to a lover's heart, his lips transgressed again. No one saw; she only felt; they both alone knew.

And this was at the very moment that dear excellent Mrs Tufnell felt it to be nothing short of a sin and a shame that they should have all enjoyed themselves so much when that poor dear had been done out of it all!

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A BAD HYPOCRITE.

"'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face
When discontent sits heavy at my heart."

—ADDISON.

"What am I to think—what am I to think?"

Lady Matilda had dismissed her maid, and was musing over her fire ere she went to bed upon the Christmas Eve whereof so much has already been narrated.

"What am I to think?" was the refrain of all her puzzled,

happy, foolish thoughts. In reality, she imagined she knew very well what to think; but somehow it pleased her to be perplexed and discomposed, and affectedly vexed, and secretly more charmed with Challoner than ever. Bold, heartless, presuming man—craven caittiff—to dare so much, to stop so

short ; villain—coward—by turns she flouted him for this, by turns for that : in very truth she had never thought aught became him better than those extremes of presumption and modesty, those alternations betwixt forwardness and backsliding. She had heard his breathing short and thick, had caught the broken whisper, marked the catch in the throat, and felt the clasp of the hand. She had seen the revulsion, the struggle, the resolution growing apace ; and then what the humility of the man doubtless termed the hold regained over his runaway passions, but which she, so superior in her knowledge of all, and contempt of all, scouted as the unwelcome and unnecessary and tiresome and provoking voice of an inward mentor, who ought by this time to have had his mouth stopped.

“ Really I can show him no more plainly than I do,” mused she, half sighing, half smiling ; “ really, my dear Mr Challoner, it is very pretty to see you look so lugubrious, and very touching and pathetic to hear your voice tremble and shake, and to watch you force down your throat again the kind words and accents that *will* come up when poor Matilda is by. He is in love—I’d stake every womanly power I have, the man is in love. He does all that he can do, he says all that he can say, short of *the* thing, the one thing. Opportunities ? He has had hosts of opportunities ; he has opportunities at every turn ; this whole evening was one long opportunity. Were we not together, always together, often alone together ? He never left me for above a few minutes at a time, and then only when I sent him. I sent him for the pleasure of seeing him return. I could not discover so obscure a nook to fly to, but what he would track me instantly and follow ; I

could not be tired but he would rest too. And then he held my hand, and kissed it twice. Yes, he kissed it just here, and held the place afterwards. What right had he to hold it and yet not a word, not a single word ? Oh,” with a burst, “ I like his silence—I love his silence. His silence is more, a thousand times more to me than any other man’s speech. He shall be silent, silent as the grave, silent for evermore, if so he pleases, once he has spoken out. Poor man,” mocking, “ poor—dear—*blind* man. Matilda is too good for you, is she ? Too beautiful, too rich, too highly born ? Oh dear, yes, she is all that, we know very well ; but stop a little, my friend, you will find she is too *clever* also. You are not clever, Mr Challoner—not particularly clever, at least ; and certainly you are not beautiful, and probably you are not rich. I wonder what you are, or why I—— Pshaw ! you *shall* speak, sir ; I say you shall. You have no right now to hold your tongue, and hang your head, and put your finger in your mouth like a baby. Baby ? It is I that am the baby to let him play with me thus. He sees, he knows his power, and abuses it. He shall not, he shall not,” excitedly. “ I—oh, if I can but preserve this bold heart when I am with him, if I can but keep a merry heart and tongue, and cheat him with my face. Let me see,—can it be that I have been too soft and yielding ? Perhaps I have. Then how remedy the damage ? Coquet with another ? But there is no one else to coquet with except Robert, and one might as well dance round a tombstone. No, no ; no coquetting. No ; I must be all in all to myself and by myself. I will amuse myself, be good friends with myself, and have no need of any one but myself. I will send the gentlemen

about their business. It will be fit for them to go out of doors to-morrow; but it shall be too cold, or too wet, or too early, or too late, or too anything, for me. They will have to excuse me. Then I will—shall I have a headache? But a headache of that kind is missyish and vulgar; headache is unbecoming, too, and troublesome to manage. So I will be just myself—myself as I am when this wicked Jem Challoner is not by; a much better self in reality than the self that appears for him,—a silly subdued shadow of the real Matilda. What can he see in her to fancy, I wonder? But these mild soft-eyed impostors, these abominable hypocritical make-believes of men, one never knows what they do *not* see. Well, Mr Challoner, you have done so well that you deserve to do better still; and so, to bed, Matilda, my dear,” gaily saluting the mirror as she passed. “Good night, my poor, little, ill-used, tormented, tantalised Matilda,—enter to-morrow morning, *Her Ladyship*.”

And accordingly her ladyship drew up her long neck like a swan when she received Mr Challoner's morning greeting, received it gently and gracefully as usual, including all in her Christmas greeting and good-wishes; but the guest, who was himself rather pale, since even the cold night air and late exercise had failed to procure him more than a short portion of hurried feverish sleep, Challoner noticed that she did not meet his eager eye, and answered but lightly his earnest inquiries.

She was almost as much occupied about the non-arrival of the post-boy as he was, and surely with not half so good a cause. The news from the outer world could mean nothing to her, wrapped as she was and must be in the one

thought; but for him it was different,—his was fear, and fear he must. He breathed again when it was made known that the mails had been delayed, and no one could say when they might arrive: a heavy snowstorm had set in in the north.

Then Teddy proposed the ice again, but Matilda excused herself on the plea of fatigue; and though she resisted, on the same ground, the allurements of the billiard-room, the insensate one for whom the whole ridiculous little pretence was got up, saw nothing amiss; it was not to be expected that she should be at their beck and call (as Teddy seemed to expect), and he had the whole day before him. Off he went to the kennels with the brothers for the morning cigar; and Lady Matilda, looking after them, felt that she had done nothing, that she never could do anything steadily and resolutely against Challoner. She laughed at herself, and longed for a chance of undoing the little she had attempted.

It came after a time: an hour or two later the billiard-balls were heard going, and the post came in. “Oh, Teddy, what do you think?” cried Matilda, entering the billiard-room with an open letter in her hand. “The bag has just come; there is nothing for you, Mr Challoner,”—in parenthesis. “What do you think, Teddy? This is from Marion Appleby” (Challoner, whose stroke it was, lifted his cue, and took position; naturally Marion Appleby's note could not concern him); “she has just heard from the people Juliet is with;—you know I told you Juliet was still away, and you would not believe me——”

—“Well?” said Teddy, watching his opponent's deliberate aim, and on this account only half interested even in his dear Ap-

plebys, — “well? What about Juliet?”

“Oh, poor Juliet, I am so sorry for her! they have only just heard, and sent this note to tell us. Poor Juliet has taken small-pox.”

The cue slid along Challoner's finger, and a brilliant winning hazard was followed by an almost impossible cannon.

“Bravo!” cried Lady Matilda, looking round with a smile. “Bravo!” And then she whispered to herself that the very sound of her voice sent the blood to her lover's cheek and the light to his eye. He did not seek a fresh position, nor follow up the run; he left his place and came towards her, as though drawn by a magnet: and when she asked why he did not go on, laughed and had no answer.

Teddy, however, was full of the Applebys again. He wanted to know everything, to see the note, to hear what was going to be done, who was going to nurse the sufferer? Whereat Challoner turned away again, for he had not thought of that.

“We must call and inquire,” wound up young Lessingham, profoundly.

“I can write, which will be better,” corrected his sister. “I shall send a note of sympathy at once.”

“Ay, very well; send a note if you like. But we must call and inquire, all the same. We must call this afternoon.”

“And inquire—for whom?”

“For Juliet, of course.”

“But they can know nothing more yet. We know as much as they do at present. There has only been a telegram——”

“And surely a telegram is enough? I do wonder at you, Matilda; you never think of things unless I remind you. You would let poor

Juliet be as ill as she could be without ever calling to inquire, just because the news came by telegram. I suppose it is all because you don't want to go.”

“I do not want to go, certainly; but,” relenting, “but, my dear Ted, I will go, if you wish it. We will all go. We can walk over after luncheon. Will you come, Mr Challoner? Unless, indeed, you would prefer—— Of course, Overton never makes afternoon calls, so do not feel yourself the least obliged.”

“Not at all. I do not feel in the least *obliged*.”

“And you will just please yourself?”

“And I shall—just please myself.”

She understood: and the glance he received was so arch, so sweet, so apprehensive, that the speaker threw down his cue, with “I am for Matilda, for Matilda before all the world,” blazoned unmistakably in his eye and on his brow. She turned to depart.

“Aren't you going on?” cried poor Teddy, who saw himself about to be left without an antagonist.

“My dear fellow, your sister wants me,” drawled his friend over his shoulder. “She told me to ‘please myself,’ and this is how I ‘please myself,’” aside to her. “We are going to have some music, aren't we? Give you your revenge before dinner, Ted,” following Matilda from the room. “Don't think you were going to win, my dear boy.”

“You have the devil's own luck in everything, I do believe,” was the rejoinder, but it was spoken to empty walls. Teddy was alone, he was deserted; for the first time in his life he felt angry with Challoner, and that anger was not without fruits in the evil day to come.

MY WASTED YOUTH.

"Que vous ai-je donc fait, O mes jeunes années !"

LET me alone !

I am weeping my wasted youth.
I am weeping the days when the orchard was white and white
As the driven snow, and I did not go, as I might,
To let the blossoms fall and cover me o'er,
And take the heart of the Spring to my own heart's core.
I am weeping my wasted youth.
Let me alone !

Let me alone !

I am weeping my wasted youth.
I am weeping the starlight nights that I did not see,
And the starlike eyes that never lit up for me,
The moons that on rippling waters have glanced and shone,
And the tender faces I have not looked upon.
I am weeping my wasted youth.
Let me alone !

Let me alone !

I am weeping my wasted youth.
I am weeping the merry dances I could not tread,
And the tears of happiness that I did not shed,
The feverish joy, and dumb, delicious pain,
And the lost, lost moments that will not come again.
I am weeping my wasted youth.
Let me alone !

Let me alone !

I am weeping my wasted youth.
I am praying for those who have seen their youth go by,
With half its sweets untasted, unknown, as I,
That God—forasmuch as He left the first bright page
Of their life a blank—would send them love in their age.
I am weeping my wasted youth.
Let me alone !

E. R. CHAPMAN.

BOURGONEF.—PART II.

CHAPTER V.—FLUCTUATIONS.

ALONE with my thoughts, and capable of pursuing conjectures and conclusions without external interruption, I quickly exhausted all the hypothetical possibilities of the case, and, from having started with the idea that Bourgonef was the assassin, I came at last to the more sensible conclusion that I was a constructive blockhead. My suspicions were simply outrageous in their defect of evidence, and could never for one moment have seemed otherwise to any imagination less riotously active than mine.

I bathed my heated head, undressed myself, and got into bed, considering what I should say to the police when I went next morning to communicate my suspicions. And it is worthy of remark, as well as somewhat ludicrously self-betraying, that no sooner did I mentally see myself in the presence of the police, and was thus forced to confront my suspicions with some appearance of evidence, than the whole fabric of my vision rattled to the ground. What had I to say to the police? Simply that, on the evening of the night when Lieschen was murdered, I had passed, in a public thoroughfare, a man whom I could not identify, but who, as I could not help fancying, seemed to recognise me. This man, I had persuaded myself, was the murderer; for which persuasion I was unable to adduce a tittle of evidence. It was uncoloured by the remotest probability. It was truly and simply the suggestion of my vagrant fancy, which had mysteriously settled itself into a conviction; and having thus

capriciously identified the stranger with Lieschen's murderer, I now, upon evidence quite as preposterous, identified Bourgonef with the stranger.

The folly became apparent even to myself. If Bourgonef had in his possession a rouge-pot and false beard, I could not but acknowledge that he had made no attempt to conceal them, nor had he manifested any confusion on their appearance. He had quietly characterised them as masquerading follies. Moreover, I now began to remember distinctly that the stranger did carry a walking-stick in his right hand; and as Bourgonef had lost his right arm, that settled the point.

Into such complications would the tricks of imagination lead me! I blushed mentally, and resolved to let it serve as a lesson in future. It is needless, however, to say that the lesson was lost, as such lessons always are lost; a strong tendency in any direction soon disregards all the teachings of experience. I am still not the less the victim of my constructive imagination, because I have frequently had to be ashamed of its vagaries.

The next morning I awoke with a lighter breast, rejoicing in the caution which had delayed me from any rash manifestation of suspicions now seen to be absurd. I smiled as the thought arose: what if this suspected stranger should also be pestered by an active imagination, and should entertain similar suspicions of me? He must have seen in my eyes the look of recognition which I saw in his. On hearing of the

murder, our meeting may also have recurred to him; and his suspicions would have this colour, wanting to mine, that I happen to inherit with my Italian blood a somewhat truculent appearance, which has gained for me among friends the playful *sobriquet* of "the brigand."

Anxious to atone at once for my folly, and to remove from his mind any misgiving—if it existed—at my quitting him so soon after the disclosures of the masquerading details, I went to Bourgonef as soon as I was dressed, and proposed a ramble till the diligence started for Munich. He was sympathetic in his inquiries about my colic, which I assured him had quite passed away, and out we went. The sharp morning air of March made us walk briskly, and gave a pleasant animation to our thoughts. As he discussed the acts of the Provisional Government, so wise, temperate, and energetic, the fervour and generosity of his sentiments stood out in such striking contrast with the deed I had last night recklessly imputed to him, that I felt deeply ashamed, and was nearly carried away by mingled admiration and self-reproach to confess the absurd vagrancy of my thoughts, and humbly ask his pardon. But you can understand the reluctance at a confession so insulting to him, so degrading to me. It is at all times difficult to tell a man, face to face, eye to eye, the evil you have thought of him, unless the recklessness of anger seizes on it as a weapon with which to strike; and I had now so completely unsaid to myself all that I once had thought of evil, that to put it in words seemed a gratuitous injury to me and insult to him.

A day or two after our arrival in Munich a reaction began steadily to set in. Ashamed as I was of

my suspicions, I could not altogether banish from my mind the incident which had awakened them. The image of that false beard would mingle with my thoughts. I was vaguely uncomfortable at the idea of Bourgonef's carrying about with him obvious materials of disguise. In itself this would have had little significance; but coupled with the fact that his devoted servant was—in spite of all Bourgonef's eulogies—repulsively ferocious in aspect, capable, as I could not help believing, of any brutality,—the suggestion was unpleasant. You will understand that having emphatically acquitted Bourgonef in my mind, I did not again distinctly charge him with any complicity in the mysterious murder; on the contrary, I should indignantly have repelled such a thought: but the uneasy sense of some mystery about him, coupled with the accessories of disguise, and the aspect of his servant, gave rise to dim, shadowy forebodings which ever and anon passed across my mind.

Did it ever occur to you, reader, to reflect on the depths of deceit which lie still and dark even in the honestest minds? Society reposes on a thin crust of convention, underneath which lie fathomless possibilities of crime, and consequently suspicions of crime. Friendship, however close and dear, is not free from its reserves, unspoken beliefs, more or less suppressed opinions. The man whom you would indignantly defend against any accusation brought by another, so confident are you in his unshakable integrity, you may yourself momentarily suspect of crimes far exceeding those which you repudiate. Indeed, I have known sagacious men hold that perfect frankness in expressing the thoughts is a sure sign of imperfect friendship; something is always

suppressed; and it is not he who loves you that "tells you candidly what he thinks" of your person, your pretensions, your children, or your poems. Perfect candour is dictated by envy, or some other unfriendly feeling, making friendship a stalking-horse, under cover of which it shoots the arrows which will rankle. Friendship is candid only when the candour is urgent—meant to avert impending danger or to rectify an error. The candour which is an impertinence never springs from friendship. Love is sympathetic.

I do not of course mean to intimate that my feeling for *Bourgonef* was of that deep kind which justifies the name of friendship. I only want to say that in our social relations we are constantly hiding from each other, under the smiles and courtesies of friendly interest, thoughts which, if expressed, would destroy all possible communion—and that, nevertheless, we are not insincere in our smiles and courtesies; and therefore there is nothing paradoxical in my having felt great admiration for *Bourgonef*, and great pleasure in his society, while all the time there was deep down in the recesses of my thoughts an uneasy sense of a dark mystery which possibly connected him with a dreadful crime.

This feeling was roused into greater activity by an incident which now occurred. One morning I went to *Bourgonef's* room, which was at some distance from mine on the same floor, intending to propose a visit to the sculpture at the *Glyptothek*. To my surprise I found *Ivan* the serf standing before the closed door. He looked at me like a mastiff about to spring; and intimated by significant gestures that I was not allowed to enter the room. Concluding that his master was occupied in some way, and desired not

to be disturbed, I merely signified by a nod that my visit was of no consequence, and went out. On returning about an hour afterwards I saw *Ivan* putting three pink letters into the letter-box of the hotel. I attached no significance to this very ordinary fact at the time, but went up to my room and began writing my letters, one of which was to my lawyer, sending him an important receipt. The dinner-bell sounded before I had half finished this letter; but I wrote on, determined to have done with it at once, in case the afternoon should offer any expedition with *Bourgonef*.

At dinner he quietly intimated that *Ivan* had informed him of my visit, and apologised for not having been able to see me. I, of course, assured him that no apology was necessary, and that we had plenty of time to visit the sculpture together without intruding on his private hours. He informed me that he was that afternoon going to pay a visit to *Schwanthaler* the sculptor, and if I desired it, he would ask permission on another occasion to take me with him. I jumped at the proposal, as may be supposed.

Dinner over, I strolled into the *Englische Garten*, and had my coffee and cigar there. On my return, I was vexed to find that in the hurry of finishing my letters I had sealed the one to my lawyer, and had not enclosed the receipt which had been the object of writing. Fortunately it was not too late. Descending to the bureau of the hotel, I explained my mistake to the head-waiter, who unlocked the letter-box to search for my letter. It was found at once, for there were only seven or eight in the box. Among these my eye naturally caught the three pink letters which I had that morning seen *Ivan* drop into the box; but

although they were *seen* by me they were not *noticed* at the time, my mind being solely occupied with rectifying the stupid blunder I had made.

Once more in my own room a sudden revelation startled me. Every one knows what it is to have details come under the eye which the mind first interprets long after the eye ceases to rest upon them. The impressions are received passively: but they are registered, and can be calmly read whenever the mind is in activity. It was so now. I suddenly, as if now for the first time, saw that the addresses on Bourgonef's letters were written in a fluent, masterly hand, bold in character, and with a certain sweep which might have come from a painter. The thrill which this vision gave me will be intelligible when you remember that Bourgonef had lost or pretended to have lost his right arm, and was, as I before intimated, far from dexterous with his left. That

no man recently thrown upon the use of a left hand could have written those addresses was too evident. What, then, was the alternative? The empty sleeve was an imposture! At once the old horrible suspicion returned, and this time with tenfold violence and with damnable confirmation.

Pressing my temples between my hands, I tried to be calm and to survey the evidence without precipitation; but for some time the conflict of thoughts was too violent. Whatever might be the explanation, clear it was that Bourgonef, for some purposes, was practising a deception, and had, as I knew, other means of disguising his appearance. This, on the most favourable interpretation, branded him with suspicion. This excluded him from the circle of honest men.

But did it connect him with the murder of Lieschen Lehfeldt? In my thought it did so indubitably; but I was aware of the difficulty of making this clear to any one else.

CHAPTER VI.—FIRST LOVE.

If the reader feels that my suspicions were not wholly unwarranted, were indeed inevitable, he will not laugh at me on learning that once more these suspicions were set aside, and the fact—the damnable fact, as I regarded it—discovered by me so accidentally, and, I thought, providentially, was robbed of all its significance by Bourgonef himself casually and carelessly avowing it in conversation, just as one may avow a secret infirmity, with some bitterness, but without any implication of deceit in its concealment.

I was the more prepared for this revulsion of feeling, by the difficulty I felt in maintaining my suspicions in the presence of one so gentle and so refined. He had

come into my room that evening to tell me of his visit to Schwanthaler, and of the sculptor's flattering desire to make my personal acquaintance. He spoke of Schwanthaler, and of his earnest efforts in art, with so much enthusiasm, and was altogether so charming, that I felt abashed before him, incapable of ridding myself of the dreadful suspicions, yet incapable of firmly believing him to be what I thought. But more than this, there came the new interest awakened in me by his story; and when, in the course of this story, he incidentally disclosed the fact that he had not lost his arm, all my suspicions vanished at once.

We had got, as usual, upon politics, and were differing more than

usual, because he gave greater prominence to his sympathy with the Red Republicans. He accused me of not being "thorough-going," which I admitted. This he attributed to the fact of my giving a divided heart to politics—a condition natural enough at my age and with my hopes. "Well," said I, laughing, "you don't mean to take a lofty stand upon your few years' seniority. If my age renders it natural, does yours profoundly alter such a conviction?"

"My age! no. But you have the hopes of youth. I have none. I am banished for ever from the joys and sorrows of domestic life; and therefore, to live at all, must concentrate my soul on great abstractions and public affairs."

"But why banished, unless self-banished?"

"Woman's love is impossible. You look incredulous. I do not allude to this," he said, taking up the empty sleeve, and by so doing sending a shiver through me.

"The loss of your arm," I said—and my voice trembled slightly, for I felt that a crisis was at hand—"although a misfortune to you, would really be an advantage in gaining a woman's affections. Women are so romantic, and their imaginations are so easily touched!"

"Yes," he replied bitterly; "but I have not lost my arm."

I started. He spoke bitterly, yet calmly. I awaited his explanation in great suspense.

"To have lost my arm in battle, or even by an accident, would perhaps have lent me a charm in woman's eyes. But, as I said, my arm hangs by my side—withered, unpresentable."

I breathed again. He continued in the same tone, and without noticing my looks.

"But it is not this which banishes me. Woman's love might be hoped for, had I far worse infir-

mities. The cause lies deeper. It lies in my history. A wall of granite has grown up between me and the sex."

"But, my dear fellow, do you—wounded, as I presume to guess, by some unworthy woman—extend the fault of one to the whole sex? Do you despair of finding another true, because a first was false?"

"They are all false," he exclaimed, with energy. "Not, perhaps, all false from inherent viciousness, though many are that, but false because their inherent weakness renders them incapable of truth. Oh! I know the catalogue of their good qualities. They are often pitiful, self-devoting, generous; but they are so by fits and starts, just as they are cruel, remorseless, exacting, by fits and starts. They have no constancy,—they are too weak to be constant even in evil; their minds are all impressions; their actions are all the issue of immediate promptings. Swayed by the fleeting impulses of the hour, they have only one persistent, calculable motive on which reliance can always be placed—that motive is vanity; you are always sure of them there. It is from vanity they are good—from vanity they are evil; their devotion and their desertion equally vanity. I know them. To me they have disclosed the shallows of their natures. God! how I have suffered from them!"

A deep, low exclamation, half sob, half curse, closed this tirade. He remained silent for a few minutes, looking on the floor; then, suddenly turning his eyes upon me, said—

"Were you ever in Heidelberg?"

"Never."

"I thought all your countrymen went there? Then you will never have heard anything of my story. Shall I tell you how my youth was blighted? Will you care to listen?"

"It would interest me much."

"I had reached the age of seven-and-twenty," he began, "without having once known even the vague stirrings of the passion of love. I admired many women, and courted the admiration of them all; but I was as yet not only heart-whole, but, to use your Shakespeare's phrase, Cupid had not tapped me on the shoulder.

"This detail is not unimportant in my story. You may possibly have observed that in those passionate natures which reserve their force, and do not fritter away their feelings in scattered flirtations or trivial love-affairs, there is a velocity and momentum, when the movement of passion is once excited, greatly transcending all that is ever felt by expansive and expressive natures. Slow to be moved, when they do move it is with the whole mass of the heart. So it was with me. I purchased my immunity from earlier entanglements by the price of my whole life. I am not what I was. Between my past and present self there is a gulf; that gulf is dark, stormy, and profound. On the far side stands a youth of hope, energy, ambition, and unclouded happiness, with great capacities for loving; on this side a blighted manhood, with no prospects but suffering and storm."

He paused. With an effort he seemed to master the suggestions which crowded upon his memory, and continued his narrative in an equable tone.

"I had been for several weeks at Heidelberg. One of my intimate companions was Kestner the architect, and he one day proposed to introduce me to his sister-in-law Ottilie, of whom he had repeatedly spoken to me in terms of great affection and esteem.

"We went, and we were most cordially received. Ottilie justi-

fied Kestner's praises. Pretty, but not strikingly so—clever, but not obtrusively so; her soft dark eyes were frank and winning; her manner was gentle and retiring, with that dash of sentimentalism which seems native to all German girls, but without any of the ridiculous extravagance too often seen in them. I liked her all the more because I was perfectly at my ease with her, and this was rarely the case in my relations to young women.

"You leap at once to the conclusion that we fell in love. Your conclusion is precipitate. Seeing her continually, I grew to admire and respect her; but the significant smiles, winks, and hints of friends, pointing unmistakably at a supposed understanding existing between us, only made me more seriously examine the state of my feelings, and assured me that I was not in love. It is true that I felt a serene pleasure in her society, and that when away from her she occupied much of my thoughts. It is true that I often thought of her as a wife; and in these meditations she appeared as one eminently calculated to make a happy home. But it is no less true that during a temporary absence of hers of a few weeks I felt no sort of uneasiness, no yearning for her presence, no vacancy in my life. I knew, therefore, that it was not love which I felt.

"So much for my feelings. What of hers? They seemed very like my own. That she admired me, and was pleased to be with me, was certain. That she had a particle of fiery love for me I did not, could not believe. And it was probably this very sense of her calmness which kept my feelings quiet. For love is a flame which often can be kindled only by contact with flame. Certainly this is so in proud, reserved natures,

which are chilled by any contact with temperature not higher than their own.

"On her return, however, from that absence I have mentioned, I was not a little fluttered by an obvious change in her manner; an impression which subsequent meetings only served to confirm. Although still very quiet, her manner had become more tender, and it had that delicious shyness which is the most exquisite of flatteries, as

it is one of the most enchanting of graces. I saw her tremble slightly beneath my voice, and blush beneath my gaze.

"There was no mistaking these signs. It was clear that she loved me; and it was no less clear that I, taking fire at this discovery, was myself rapidly falling in love. I will not keep you from my story by idle reflections. Take another cigar." He rose and paced up and down the room in silence.

CHAPTER VII.—AGALMA.

"At this juncture there arrived from Paris the woman to whom the great sorrow of my life is due. A fatalist might read in her appearance at this particular moment the signs of a prearranged doom. A few weeks later, and her arrival would have been harmless; I should have been shielded from all external influence by the absorbing force of love. But, alas! this was not to be. My fate had taken another direction. The woman had arrived whose shadow was to darken the rest of my existence. That woman was Agalma Liebenstein.

"How is it that the head which we can only see surrounded with a halo, or a shadow, when the splendours of achievement or the infamy of shame instruct our eyes, is by the uninstructed eye observed as wholly vulgar? We all profess to be physiognomists; how is it we are so lamentably mistaken in our judgments? Here was a woman in whom my ignorant eyes saw nothing at all remarkable except golden hair of unusual beauty. When I say golden, I am not speaking loosely. I do not mean red or flaxen hair, but hair actually resembling burnished gold more than anything else. Its ripples on her brow caught the light like

a coronet. This was her one beauty, and it was superb. For the rest, her features were characterless. Her figure was tall and full; not graceful, but sweepingly imposing. At first I noticed nothing about her except the braided splendour of her glorious hair."

He rose, and went into his bedroom, from which he returned with a small trinket-box in his hand. This he laid open on the table, disclosing a long strand of exquisite fair hair lying on a cushion of dark-blue velvet—

"Look at that," he said. "Might it not have been cut from an angel's head?"

"It is certainly wonderful."

"It must have been hair like this which crowned the infamous head of Lucrezia Borgia," he said, bitterly. "She, too, had golden hair; but hers must have been of paler tint, like her nature."

He resumed his seat, and, fixing his eyes upon the lock, continued:

"She was one of Ottilie's friends—dear friends, they called each other,—which meant that they kissed each other profusely, and told each other all their secrets, or as much as the lying nature of the sex permitted and suggested. It is, of course, impossible for me to disen-

tangle my present knowledge from my past impressions so as to give you a clear description of what I then thought of Agalma. Enough that, as a matter of fact, I distinctly remember not to have admired her, and to have told Ottilie so; and when Ottilie, in surprise at my insensibility, assured me that men were in general wonderfully charmed with her (though, for her part, she had never understood why), I answered, and answered sincerely, that it might be true with the less refined order of men, but that men of taste would certainly be rather repelled from her.

"This opinion of mine, or some report of it, reached Agalma.

"It may have been the proximate cause of my sorrows. Without this stimulus to her vanity, she might have left me undisturbed. I don't know. All I know is, that over many men Agalma exercised great influence, and that over me she exercised in a short time the spell of fascination. No other word will explain her influence; for it was not based on excellences such as the mind could recognise to be attractions; it was based on a mysterious personal power, something awful in its mysteriousness, as all demoniac powers are. One source of her influence over men I think I can explain: she at once captivated and repelled them. By artful appeals to their vanity, she made them interested in her and in her opinion of them, and yet kept herself inaccessible by a pride which was the more fascinating because it always seemed about to give way. Her instinct fastened upon the weak point in those she approached. This made her seductive to men, because she flattered their weak points; and hateful to women, because she flouted and disclosed their weak points.

"Her influence over me began in the following way. One day,

at a picnic, having been led by her into a conversation respecting the relative inferiority of the feminine intellect, I was forced to speak rather more earnestly than usual, when suddenly in a lower voice she said—

"‘I am willing to credit anything you say; only pray don't continue talking to me so earnestly.’

"‘Why not?’ I asked, surprised. “She looked at me with peculiar significance, but remained silent.

"‘May I ask why not?’ I said.

"‘Because if you do, somebody may be jealous.’ There was a laughing defiance in her eye as she spoke.

"‘And pray, who has a right to be jealous of me?’

"‘Oh! you know well enough.’

"It was true; I did know: and she knew that I knew it. To my shame be it said that I was weak enough to yield to an equivocation which I now see to have been disloyal, but which I then pretended to have been no more than delicacy to Ottilie. As, in point of fact, there had never been a word passed between us respecting our mutual feelings, I considered myself bound in honour to assume that there was nothing tacitly acknowledged.

Piqued by her tone and look, I disavowed the existence of any claims upon my attention; and to prove the sincerity of my words, I persisted in addressing my attentions to her. Once or twice I fancied I caught flying glances, in which some of the company criticised my conduct, and Ottilie also seemed to me unusually quiet. But her manner, though quiet, was untroubled and unchanged. I talked less to her than usual, partly because I talked so much to Agalma, and partly because I felt that Agalma's eyes were on us. But no shadow of ‘temper’ or reserve darkened our interchange of speech.

"On our way back, I know not what devil prompted me to ask Agalma whether she had really been in earnest in her former allusion to 'somebody.'

"Yes," she said, "I was in earnest then."

"And now?"

"Now I have doubts. I may have been misinformed. It's no concern of mine, any way; but I had been given to understand. However, I admit that my own eyes have not confirmed what my ears heard."

"This speech was irritating on two separate grounds. It implied that people were talking freely of my attachment, which, until I had formally acknowledged it, I resented as an impertinence; and it implied that, from personal observation, Agalma doubted Otilie's feelings for me. This alarmed my quick-retreating pride! I, too, began to doubt. Once let loose on that field, imagination soon saw shapes enough to confirm any doubt. Otilie's manner certainly had seemed less tender—nay, somewhat indifferent—during the last few days. Had the arrival of that heavy lout, her cousin, anything to do with this change?"

"Not to weary you by recalling all the unfolding stages of this miserable story with the minuteness of detail which my own memory morbidly lingers on, I will hurry to the catastrophe. I grew more and more doubtful of the existence in Otilie's mind of any feeling stronger than friendship for me; and as this doubt strengthened, there arose the flattering suspicion that I was becoming an object of greater interest to Agalma, who had quite changed her tone towards me, and had become serious in her speech and manner. Weeks passed. Otilie had fallen from her pedestal, and had taken her place among agreeable ac-

quaintances. One day I suddenly learned that Otilie was engaged to her cousin.

"You will not wonder that Agalma, who before this had exercised great fascination over me, now doubly became an object of the most tender interest. I fell madly in love. Hitherto I had never known that passion. My feeling for Otilie I saw was but the inarticulate stammerings of the mighty voice which now sounded through the depths of my nature. The phrase, *madly in love*, is no exaggeration; madness alone knows such a fever of the brain, such a tumult of the heart. It was not that reason was overpowered; on the contrary, reason was intensely active, but active with that logic of flames which lights up the vision of maniacs.

"Although, of course, my passion was but too evident to every one, I dreaded its premature avowal, lest I should lose her; and almost equally dreaded delay, lest I should suffer from that also. At length the avowal was extorted from me by jealousy of a brilliant Pole—Korinski—who had recently appeared in our circle, and was obviously casting me in the shade by his superior advantages of novelty, of personal attraction, and of a romantic history. She accepted me; and now, for a time, I was the happiest of mortals. The fever of the last few weeks was abating; it gave place to a deep tide of hopeful joy. Could I have died then! Could I even have died shortly afterwards, when I knew the delicious misery of a jealousy not too absorbing! For you must know that my happiness was brief. Jealousy, to which all passion of a deep and exacting power is inevitably allied, soon began to disturb my content. Agalma had no tenderness. She permitted caresses, never returned them. She was

ready enough to listen to all my plans for the future, so long as the recital moved amid details of fortune and her position in society—that is, so long as her vanity was interested; but I began to observe with pain that her thoughts never rested on tender domesticities and poetic anticipations. This vexed me more and more. The very spell which she exercised over me made her want of tenderness more intolerable. I yearned for her love—for some sympathy with the vehement passion which was burning within me; and she was as marble.

“You will not be surprised to hear that I reproached her bitterly with her indifference. That is the invariable and fatal folly of lovers—they seem to imagine that a heart can be scolded into tenderness! To my reproaches she at first answered impatiently that they were unjust; that it was not her fault if her nature was less expansive than mine; and that it was insulting to be told she was indifferent to the man whom she had consented to marry. Later she answered my reproaches with haughty defiance, one day intimating that if I really thought what I said, and repented our engagement, it would be most prudent for us to separate ere it was too late. This quieted me for a while. But it brought no balm to my wounds.

“And now fresh tortures were added. Korinski became quite marked in his attentions to Agalma. These she received with evident delight; so much so, that I saw by the glances of others that they were scandalised at it; and this of course increased my pain. My renewed reproaches only made her manner colder to me; to Korinski it became what I would gladly have seen towards myself.

“The stress and agitation of

those days were too much for me. I fell ill, and for seven weeks I lay utterly prostrate. On recovering, this note was handed to me. It was from Agalma.”

Bourgonef here held out to me a crumpled letter, and motioned that I should open it and read. It ran thus:—

“I have thought much of what you have so often said, that it would be for the happiness of both if our unfortunate engagement were set aside. That you have a real affection for me I believe, and be assured that I once had a real affection for you; not, perhaps, the passionate love which a nature so exacting as yours demands, and which I earnestly hope it may one day find, but a genuine affection nevertheless, which would have made me proud to share your lot. But it would be uncandid in me to pretend that this now exists. Your incessant jealousy, the angry feelings excited by your reproaches, the fretful irritation in which for some time we have lived together, has completely killed what love I had, and I no longer feel prepared to risk the happiness of both of us by a marriage. What you said the other night convinces me that it is even your desire our engagement should cease. It is certainly mine. Let us try to think kindly of each other and meet again as friends.

“AGALMA LIEBENSTEIN.”

When I had read this and returned it to him, he said: “You see that this was written on the day I was taken ill. Whether she knew that I was then helpless I know not. At any rate, she never sent to inquire after me. She went off to Paris; Korinski followed her; and—as I quickly learned on going once more into society—they were married! Did you ever, in the whole course of

your experience, hear of such heartless conduct?"

Bourgonef asked this with a ferocity which quite startled me. I did not answer him; for, in truth, I could not see that Agalma had been very much to blame, even as he told the story, and felt sure that could I have heard her version it would have worn a very different aspect. That she was cold, and disappointed him, might be true enough, but there was no crime; and I perfectly understood how thoroughly odious he must have made himself to her by his exactions and reproaches. I understood this, perhaps, all the better, because in the course of his narrative Bourgonef had revealed to me aspects of his nature which were somewhat repulsive. Especially I was struck with his morbid vanity, and his readiness to impute low motives to others. This unpleasant view of his character—a character in many respects so admirable for its generosity and refinement—was deepened as he went on, instead of awaiting my reply to his question.

"For a wrong so measureless, you will naturally ask what measureless revenge I sought."

The idea had not occurred to me; indeed I could see no wrong, and this notion of revenge was somewhat startling in such a case.

"I debated it long," he continued. "I felt that since I was prevented from arresting any of the evil to myself, I could at least mature my plans for an adequate discharge of just retribution on her. It reveals the impotence resulting from the trammels of modern civilisation, that while the possibilities of wrong are infinite, the openings for vengeance are few and contemptible. Only when a man is thrown upon the necessities of this 'wild justice' does he discover how difficult vengeance really is. Had Agalma been my wife, I could have wreaked

my wrath upon her, with assurance that some of the torture she inflicted on me was to fall on her. Not having this power, what was I to do? Kill her? That would have afforded one moment of exquisite satisfaction—but to her it would have been simply death—and I wanted to kill the heart."

He seemed working with an insane passion; so that I regarded him with disgust mingled with some doubts as to what horrors he was about to relate.

"My plan was chosen. The only way to reach her heart was to strike her through her husband. For several hours daily I practised with the pistol until—in spite of only having a left hand—I acquired fatal skill. But this was not enough. Firing at a mark is simple work. Firing at a man—especially one holding a pistol pointed at you—is altogether different. I had too often heard of 'crack shots' missing their men, to rely confidently on my skill in the shooting-gallery. It was necessary that my eye and hand should be educated to familiarity with the real object. Part of the cause why duellists miss their man is from the trepidation of fear. I was without fear. At no moment of my life have I been afraid; and the chance of being shot by Korinski I counted as nothing. The other cause is unfamiliarity with the mark. This I secured myself against by getting a lay figure of Korinski's height, dressing it to resemble him, placing a pistol in its hand, and then practising at this mark in the woods. After a short time I could send a bullet through the thorax without taking more than a hasty glance at the figure.

"Thus prepared, I started for Paris. But you will feel for me when you learn that my hungry heart was baffled of its vengeance,

and baffled for ever. Agalma had been suddenly carried off by scarlet fever. Korinski had left Paris, and I felt no strong promptings to follow him, and wreak on him a futile vengeance. It was on *her* my wrath had been concentrated, and I gnashed my teeth at the thought that she had escaped me.

"My story is ended. The months of gloomy depression which succeeded, now that I was no longer sustained by the hope of vengeance, I need not speak of. My existence was desolate; and even now the desolation continues over the whole region of the emotions. I carry a dead heart within me."

CHAPTER VIII.—A SECOND VICTIM.

Bourgonef's story has been narrated with some fulness, though in less detail than he told it, in order that the reader may understand its real bearings on *my* story. Without it, the motives which impelled the strange pertinacity of my pursuit would have been unintelligible. I have said that a very disagreeable impression remained on my mind respecting certain aspects of his character, and I felt somewhat ashamed of my imperfect sagacity in having up to this period been entirely blind to those aspects. The truth is, every human being is a mystery, and remains so to the last. We fancy we know a character; we form a distinct conception of it; for years that conception remains unmodified, and suddenly the strain of some emergency or the incidental stimulus of new circumstance reveals qualities not simply unexpected, but flatly contradictory of our previous conception. We judge of a man by the angle he subtends to our eye—only thus *can* we judge of him; and this angle depends on the relation his qualities and circumstances bear to our interests and sympathies. Bourgonef had charmed me intellectually; morally I had never come closer to him than in the sympathies of public questions and abstract theories. His story had disclosed hidden depths.

My old suspicions reappeared, and a conversation we had two days afterwards helped to strengthen them.

We had gone on a visit to Schwanthaler the sculptor, at his tiny little castle of Schwaneck, a few miles from Munich. The artist was out for a walk, but we were invited to come in and await his return, which would be shortly; and meanwhile Bourgonef undertook to show me over the castle, interesting as a bit of modern Gothic, realising on a diminutive scale a youthful dream of the sculptor's. When our survey was completed—and it did not take long—we sat at one of the windows and enjoyed a magnificent prospect. "It is curious," said Bourgonef, "to be shut up here in this imitation of mediæval masonry, where every detail speaks of the dead past, and to think of the events now going on in Paris which must find imitators all over Europe, and which open to the mind such vistas of the future. What a grotesque anachronism is this Gothic castle, built in the same age as that which sees a reforming pope!"

"Yes; but is not the reforming pope himself an anachronism?"

"As a Catholic," here he smiled, intimating that his orthodoxy was not very stringent, "I cannot admit that; as a Protestant, you must admit that if there must be

a pope, he must in these days be a reformer, or—give up his temporal power. Not that I look on Pio Nono as more than a precursor: he may break ground, and point the way, but he is not the man to lead Europe out of its present Slough of Despond, and under the headship of the Church found a new and lasting republic. We want a Hildebrand, one who will be to the nineteenth century what Gregory was to the eleventh."

"Do you believe in such a possibility? Do you think the Roman pontiff can ever again sway the destinies of Europe?"

"I can hardly say I believe it; yet I see the possibility of such an opening if the right man were to arise. But I fear he will not arise; or if he should, the Conclave will stifle him. Yet there is but one alternative: either Europe must once more join in a crusade with a pope at the head; or it must hoist the red flag. There is no other issue."

"Heaven preserve us from both! And I think we shall be preserved from the pope by the rottenness of the Church; from the *drapeau rouge* by the indignation and horror of all honest men. You see how the Provisional Government has resisted the insane attempt of the fanatics to make the red flag accepted as the national banner?"

"Yes; and it is the one thing which dashes my pleasure in the new revolution. It is the one act of weakness which the Government has exhibited; a concession which will be fatal unless it be happily set aside by the energetic party of action."

"An act of weakness? say rather an act of strength. A concession? say rather the repudiation of anarchy, the assertion of law and justice."

"Not a bit. It was a conces-

sion to the fears of the timid and to the vanity of the French people. The tricolor is a French flag—not the banner of Humanity. It is because the tricolor has been identified with the victories of France that it appeals to the vanity of the vainest of people. They forget that it is the flag of a revolution which failed, and of an empire which was one perpetual outrage to humanity. Whereas the red is new; it is the symbol of an energetic, thorough-going creed. If it carries terror with it, so much the better. The tyrants and the timid should be made to tremble."

"I had no idea you were so bloodthirsty," said I, laughing at his vehemence.

"I am not bloodthirsty at all; I am only logical and consistent. There is a mass of sophistry current in the world which sickens me. People talk of Robespierre and St Just, two of the most virtuous men that ever lived—and of Dominic and Torquemada, two of the most single-minded—as if they were cruel and bloodthirsty, whereas they were only convinced."

"Is it from love of paradox that you defend these tigers?"

"Tigers, again—how those beasts are calumniated!"

He said this with a seriousness which was irresistibly comic. I shouted with laughter; but he continued, gravely—

"You think I am joking. But let me ask you why you consider the tiger more bloodthirsty than yourself? He springs upon his food—you buy yours from the butcher. He cannot live without animal food: it is a primal necessity, and he obeys the ordained instinct. You can live on vegetables; yet you slaughter beasts of the field and birds of the air (or buy them when slaughtered), and consider yourself a model of virtue. The tiger only kills his food or his

enemies; you not only kill both, but you kill one animal to make a gravy for another! The tiger is less bloodthirsty than the Christian!"

"I don't know how much of that tirade is meant to be serious; but to waive the question of the tiger's morality, do you really—I will not say sympathise, but—justify Robespierre, Dominic, St Just, and the rest of the fanatics who have waded to their ends through blood?"

"He who wills the *end*, wills the *means*."

"A devil's maxim."

"But a truth. What the foolish world shrinks at as bloodthirstiness and cruelty is very often mere force and constancy of intellect. It is not that fanatics thirst for blood—far from it,—but they thirst for the triumph of their cause. Whatever obstacle lies on their path must be removed; if a torrent of blood is the only thing that will sweep it away—the torrent must sweep."

"And sweep with it all the sentiments of pity, mercy, charity, love?"

"No: these sentiments may give a sadness to the necessity; they make the deed a sacrifice, but they cannot prevent the soul from seeing the aim to which it tends."

"This is detestable doctrine! It is the sophism which has destroyed families, devastated cities, and retarded the moral progress of the world more than anything else. No single act of injustice is ever done on this earth but it tends to perpetuate the reign of iniquity. By the feelings it calls forth it keeps up the native savagery of the heart. It breeds injustice, partly by hardening the minds of those who assent, and partly by exciting the passion of revenge in those who resist."

"You are wrong. The great drag-chain on the car of progress

is the faltering inconsistency of man. Weakness is more cruel than sternness. Sentiment is more destructive than logic."

The arrival of Schwanthaler was timely, for my indignation was rising. The sculptor received us with great cordiality, and in the pleasure of the subsequent hour, I got over to some extent the irritation Bourgonef's talk had excited.

The next day I left Munich for the Tyrol. My parting with Bourgonef was many degrees less friendly than it would have been a week before. I had no wish to see him again, and therefore gave him no address or invitation in case he should come to England. As I rolled away in the *Malleposte*, my busy thoughts reviewed all the details of our acquaintance; and the farther I was carried from his presence, the more obtrusive became the suspicions which connected him with the murder of Lieschen Lehfeldt. How, or upon what motive, was indeed an utter mystery. He had not mentioned the name of Lehfeldt. He had not mentioned having before been at Nuremberg. At Heidelberg the tragedy occurred—or was Heidelberg only a mask? It occurred to me that he had first ascertained that I had never been at Heidelberg before he placed the scene of his story there.

Thoughts such as these tormented me. Imagine, then, the horror with which I heard, soon after my arrival at Salzburg, that a murder had been committed at Grosshesslohe—one of the pretty environs of Munich much resorted to by holiday folk—corresponding in all essential features with the murder at Nuremberg! In both cases the victim was young and pretty. In both cases she was found quietly lying on the ground, stabbed to the heart, without any other traces of violence. In both cases there was a betrothed bride, and the motive

of the unknown assassin a mystery.

Such a correspondence in the essential features inevitably suggested an appalling mystery of unity in these crimes,—either as the crimes of one man, committed under some impulse of motiveless malignity and thirst for innocent blood—or as the equally appalling effect of *imitation* acting contagiously upon a criminal imagination; of which contagion there have been, unfortunately, too many examples—horrible crimes prompting certain weak and feverish imaginations, by the very horror they inspire, first to dwell on, and finally to realise their imitations.

It was this latter hypothesis which found general acceptance. Indeed it was the only one which rested upon any ground of experience. The disastrous influence of imitation, especially under the fascination of horror, was well known. The idea of any diabolical malice moving one man to pass from city to city, and there quietly single out his victims—both of them, by the very hypothesis, unrelated to him, both of them at the epoch of their lives, when

“The bosom’s lord sits lightly on its throne,”

when the peace of the heart is assured, and the future is radiantly beckoning to them,—that any man should choose such victims for such crimes, was too preposterous an idea long to be entertained. Unless the man were mad, the idea was inconceivable; and even a monomaniac must betray himself in such a course, because he would necessarily conceive himself to be accomplishing some supreme act of justice.

It was thus I argued; and indeed I should much have preferred to believe that one maniac were

involved, rather than the contagion of crime,—since one maniac must inevitably be soon detected; whereas there were no assignable limits to the contagion of imitation. And this it was which so profoundly agitated German society. In every family in which there happened to be a bride, vague tremors could not be allayed; and the absolute powerlessness which resulted from the utter uncertainty as to the quarter in which this dreaded phantom might next appear, justified and intensified those tremors. Against such an apparition there was no conceivable safeguard. From a city stricken with the plague, from a district so stricken, flight is possible, and there are the resources of medical aid. But from a moral plague like this, what escape was possible?

So passionate and profound became the terror, that I began to share the opinion which I heard expressed, regretting the widespread publicity of the modern press, since, with many undeniable benefits, it carried also the fatal curse of distributing through households, and keeping constantly under the excitement of discussion, images of crime and horror which would tend to perpetuate and extend the excesses of individual passion. The mere dwelling long on such a topic as this was fraught with evil.

This and more I heard discussed as I hurried back to Munich. To Munich? Yes; thither I was posting with all speed. Not a shadow of doubt now remained in my mind. I knew the assassin, and was resolved to track and convict him. Do not suppose that *this* time I was led away by the vagrant activity of my constructive imagination. I had something like positive proof. No sooner had I learned that the murder had

been committed at Grosshesslohe, than my thoughts at once carried me to a now memorable visit I had made there in company with Bourgonef and two young Bavarians. At the hotel where we dined, we were waited on by the niece of the landlord, a girl of remarkable beauty, who naturally excited the attention of four young men, and furnished them with a topic of conversation. One of the Bavarians had told us that she would one day be perhaps one of the wealthiest women in the country, for she was engaged to be married to a young farmer who had recently found himself, by a rapid succession of deaths, sole heir to a great brewer, whose wealth was known to be enormous.

At this moment Sophie entered bringing wine, and I saw Bourgonef slowly turn his eyes upon her with a look which then was mysterious to me, but which now spoke too plainly its dreadful meaning.

What is there in a look, you will say? Perhaps nothing; or it may be everything. To my unsuspecting, unenlightened perception, Bourgonef's gaze was simply the melancholy and half-curious gaze which such a man might be supposed to cast upon a young woman who had been made the topic of an interesting discourse. But to my mind, enlightened as to his character, and instructed as to his peculiar feelings arising from his own story, the gaze was charged with horror. It marked a victim. The whole succession of events rose before me in vivid distinctness; the separate details of suspicion gathered into unity.

Great as was Bourgonef's command over his features, he could not conceal uneasiness as well as surprise at my appearance at the *table d'hôte* in Munich. I shook hands with him, putting on as

friendly a mask as I could, and replied to his question about my sudden return by attributing it to unexpected intelligence received at Salzburg.

"Nothing serious, I hope?"

"Well, I'm afraid it will prove very serious," I said. "But we shall see. Meanwhile my visit to the Tyrol must be given up or postponed."

"Do you remain here, then?"

"I don't know what my movements will be."

Thus I had prepared him for any reserve or strangeness in my manner; and I had concealed from him the course of my movements; for at whatever cost, I was resolved to follow him and bring him to justice.

But how? Evidence I had none that could satisfy any one else, however convincing it might be to my own mind. Nor did there seem any evidence forthcoming from Grosshesslohe. Sophie's body had been found in the afternoon lying as if asleep in one of the by-paths of the wood. No marks of a struggle; no traces of the murderer. Her affianced lover, who was at Augsburg, on hearing of her fate, hurried to Grosshesslohe, but could throw no light on the murder, could give no hint as to a possible motive for the deed. But this entire absence of evidence, or even ground of suspicion, only made *my* case the stronger. It was the motiveless malignity of the deed which fastened it on Bourgonef; or rather, it was the absence of any known motive elsewhere which assured me that I had detected the motive in him.

Should I communicate my conviction to the police? It was possible that I might impress them with at least sufficient suspicion to warrant his examination—and in that case the truth might be elicited; for among the many bar-

barities and iniquities of the criminal procedure in Continental States which often press heavily on the innocent, there is this compensating advantage, that the pressure on the guilty is tenfold heavier. If the innocent are often unjustly punished—imprisoned and maltreated before their innocence can be established—the guilty seldom escape. In England we give the criminal not only every chance of escape, but many advantages. The love of fair-play is carried to excess. It seems at times as if the whole arrangements of our procedure were established with a view to giving a criminal not only the benefit of every doubt, but of every loophole through which he

can slip. Instead of this, the Continental procedure goes on the principle of closing up every loophole, and of inventing endless traps into which the accused may fall. We warn the accused not to say anything that may be prejudicial to him. They entangle him in contradictions and confessions which disclose his guilt.

Knowing this, I thought it very likely that, however artful Bourgonef might be, a severe examination might extort from him sufficient confirmation of my suspicions to warrant further procedure. But knowing also that *this* resort was open to me when all others had failed, I resolved to wait and watch.

CHAPTER IX.—FINALE.

Two days passed, and nothing occurred. My watching seemed hopeless, and I resolved to try the effect of a disguised interrogatory. It might help to confirm my already settled conviction, if it did not elicit any new evidence.

Seated in Bourgonef's room, in the old place, each with a cigar, and chatting as of old on public affairs, I gradually approached the subject of the recent murder.

"Is it not strange," I said, "that both these crimes should have happened while we were casually staying in both places?"

"Perhaps we are the criminals," he replied, laughing. I shivered slightly at this audacity. He laughed as he spoke, but there was a hard, metallic, and almost defiant tone in his voice which exasperated me.

"Perhaps we are," I said quietly. He looked full at me; but I was prepared, and my face told nothing. I added, as in explanation, "The crime being apparently contagious, we may have brought the infection from Nuremberg."

"Do you believe in that hypothesis of imitation?"

"I don't know what to believe. Do you believe in there being only one murderer? It seems such a preposterous idea. We must suppose him, at any rate, to be a maniac."

"Not necessarily. Indeed there seems to have been too much artful contrivance in both affairs, not only in the selection of the victims, but in the execution of the schemes. Cunning as maniacs often are, they are still maniacs, and betray themselves."

"If not a maniac," said I, hoping to pique him, "he must be a man of stupendous and pitiable vanity,—perhaps one of your constant-minded friends, whom you refuse to call bloodthirsty."

"Constant-minded perhaps; but why pitifully vain?"

"Why? Because only a diseased atrocity of imagination, stimulating a nature essentially base and weak in its desire to make itself conspicuous, would or could suggest such things. The

silly youth who 'fired the Ephesian dome,' the vain idiot who set fire to York Minster, the miserable Frenchmen who have committed murder and suicide with a view of making their exit striking from a world in which their appearance had been contemptible, would all sink into insignificance beside the towering infamy of baseness which—for the mere love of producing an effect on the minds of men, and thus drawing their attention upon him, which otherwise would never have marked him at all—could scheme and execute crimes so horrible and inexcusable. In common charity to human nature, let us suppose the wretch is mad; because otherwise his miserable vanity would be too loathsome." I spoke with warmth and bitterness, which increased as I perceived him wincing under the degradation of my contempt.

"If his motive *were* vanity," he said, "no doubt it would be horrible; but may it not have been revenge?"

"Revenge!" I exclaimed; "what! on innocent women?"

"You assume their innocence."

"Good God! do you know anything to the contrary?"

"Not I. But as we are conjecturing, I may as well conjecture the motive to have been revenge, as you may conjecture it to have been the desire to produce a startling effect."

"How do you justify your conjecture?"

"Simply enough. We have to suppose a motive; let us say it was revenge, and see whether that will furnish a clue."

"But it can't. The two victims were wholly unconnected with each other by any intermediate acquaintances, consequently there can have been no common wrong or common enmity in existence to furnish food for vengeance."

"That may be so; it may also be that the avenger made them vicarious victims."

"How so?"

"It is human nature. Did you ever observe a thwarted child striking in its anger the unoffending nurse, destroying its toys to discharge its wrath? Did you ever see a schoolboy, unable to wreak his anger on the bigger boy who has just struck him, turn against the nearest smaller boy and beat him? Did you ever know a schoolmaster, angered by one of the boy's parents, vent his pent-up spleen upon the unoffending class? Did you ever see a subaltern punished because an officer had been reprimanded? These are familiar examples of vicarious vengeance. When the soul is stung to fury, it must solace itself by the discharge of that fury—it must relieve its pain by the sight of pain in others. We are so constituted. We need sympathy above all things. In joy we cannot bear to see others in distress; in distress we see the joy of others with dismal envy which sharpens our pain. That is human nature."

"And," I exclaimed, carried away by my indignation, "you suppose that the sight of these two happy girls, beaming with the quiet joy of brides, was torture to some miserable wretch who had lost his bride."

I had gone too far. His eyes looked into mine. I read in his that he divined the whole drift of my suspicion—the allusion made to himself. There often passes into a look more than words can venture to express. In that look he read that he was discovered, and I read that he had recognised it. With perfect calmness, but with a metallic ring in his voice which was like the clash of swords, he said—

"I did not say that I supposed this; but as we were on the wide

field of conjecture,—utterly without evidence one way or the other, having no clue either to the man or his motives—I drew from the general principles of human nature a conclusion which was just as plausible—or absurd if you like—as the conclusion that the motive must have been vanity.”

“As you say, we are utterly without evidence, and conjecture drifts aimlessly from one thing to another. After all, the most plausible explanation is that of a contagion of imitation.”

I said this in order to cover my previous imprudence. He was not deceived—though for a few moments I fancied he was—but replied—

“I am not persuaded of that either. The whole thing is a mystery, and I shall stay here some time in the hope of seeing it cleared up. Meanwhile, for a subject of conjecture, let me show you something on which your ingenuity may profitably be employed.”

He rose and passed into his bedroom. I heard him unlocking and rummaging the drawers, and was silently reproaching myself for my want of caution in having spoken as I had done, though it was now beyond all doubt that he was the murderer, and that his motive had been rightly guessed; but with this self-reproach there was mingled a self-gratulation at the way I had got out of the difficulty, as I fancied.

He returned, and as he sat down I noticed that the lower part of his surtout was open. He always wore a long frogged and braided coat reaching to the knees—as I now know, for the purpose of concealing the arm which hung (as he said, withered) at his side. The two last fastenings were now undone.

He held in his hand a tiny chain made of very delicate wire. This he gave me, saying—

“Now what should you conjecture that to be?”

“Had it come into my hands without any remark, I should have said it was simply a very exquisite bit of iron-work; but your question points to something more out of the way.”

“It is iron-work,” he said.

Could I be deceived? A third fastening of his surtout was undone! I had seen but two a moment ago.

“And what am I to conjecture?” I asked.

“Where that iron came from? It was *not* from a mine.”

I looked at it again, and examined it attentively. On raising my eyes in inquiry—fortunately with an expression of surprise, since what met my eyes would have startled a cooler man—I saw the fourth fastening undone!

“You look surprised,” he continued, “and will be more surprised when I tell you that the iron in your hands once floated in the circulation of a man. It is made from human blood.”

“Human blood!” I murmured.

He went on expounding the physiological wonders of the blood,—how it carried, dissolved in its currents, a proportion of iron and earths; how this iron was extracted by chemists and exhibited as a curiosity; and how this chain had been manufactured from such extracts. I heard every word, but my thoughts were hurrying to and fro in the agitation of a supreme moment. That there was a dagger underneath that coat—that in a few moments it would flash forth—that a death-struggle was at hand,—I knew well. My safety depended on presence of mind. That incalculable rapidity with which, in critical moments, the mind surveys all the openings and resources of an emergency, had assured me that there was no

weapon within reach—that before I could give an alarm the tiger would be at my throat, and that my only chance was to keep my eyes fixed upon him, ready to spring on him the moment the next fastening was undone, and before he could use his arm.

At last the idea occurred to me, that as, with a wild beast, safety lies in attacking him just before he attacks you, so with this beast my best chance was audacity. Looking steadily into his face, I said slowly—

“And you would like to have such a chain made from my blood.” I rose as I spoke. He remained sitting, but was evidently taken aback.

“What do you mean?” he said.

“I mean,” said I, sternly, “that your coat is unfastened, and that if another fastening is loosened in my presence, I fell you to the earth.”

“You’re a fool!” he exclaimed.

I moved towards the door, keeping my eye fixed upon him as he sat pale and glaring at me.

“*You* are a fool,” I said—“and worse, if you stir.”

At this moment, I know not by what sense, as if I had eyes at the back of my head, I was aware of some one moving behind me, yet I dared not look aside. Suddenly two mighty folds of darkness seemed to envelop me like arms. A powerful scent ascended my nostrils. There was a ringing in my ears, a beating at my heart. Darkness came on, deeper and deeper, like huge waves. I seemed growing to gigantic stature. The waves rolled on faster and faster. The ringing became a roaring. The beating became a throbbing. Lights flashed across the darkness. Forms moved before me. On came the waves hurrying like a tide, and I sank deeper and deeper into this mighty sea of darkness. Then all was silent. Consciousness was still.

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How long I remained unconscious, I cannot tell. But it must have been some considerable time. When consciousness once more began to dawn within me, I found myself lying on a bed surrounded by a group of eager, watching faces, and became aware of a confused murmur of whispering going on around me. “*Er lebt*” (he lives) were the words which greeted my opening eyes—words which I recognised as coming from my landlord.

I had had a very narrow escape. Another moment and I should not have lived to tell the tale. The dagger that had already immolated two of Bourgonef’s objects of vengeance would have been in my breast. As it was, at the very moment when the terrible Ivan had thrown his arms round me and was stifling me with chloroform, one of the servants of the hotel, alarmed or attracted by curiosity at the sound of high words within the room, had ventured to open the door to see what was going on. The alarm had been given, and Bourgonef had been arrested and handed over to the police. Ivan, however, had disappeared; nor were the police ever able to find him. This mattered comparatively little. Ivan without his master was no more redoubtable than any other noxious animal. As an accomplice, as an instrument to execute the Will of a man like Bourgonef, he was a danger to society. The directing intelligence withdrawn, he sank to the level of the brute. I was not uneasy, therefore, at his having escaped. Sufficient for me that the real criminal, the Mind that had conceived and directed those fearful murders, was at last in the hands of justice. I felt that my task had been fully accomplished when Bourgonef’s head fell on the scaffold.

THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS.

TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

It has often been remarked that there is a certain likeness even in feature and personal appearance in distinguished persons of the same generation. In the days when dress was more important than it is now, it is very likely that the flowing peruke or neatly tied queue had something to do with this general resemblance; but no one can have looked over a collection of portraits of one particular period without being impressed by it. Still more remarkable is the mental resemblance, broken by infinite strains of diversity, with which the different strata of our race present themselves to the beholder. A certain broad general disposition and tendency, which is nowise impaired by the force of individual distinctions, a unity in contradiction, an underlying force of harmony which brings the most different tones into one, distinguishes fold by fold, and ring by ring, the growths of history. Those different lines have thus a definitive character, which, though melting on either side into what succeeds and follows, with all the delicacy of natural transition, retain a marked and separate identity. It is perhaps only when they are strengthened and made visible by completion that this character can be fully understood. The generation which is now departing from us, lingering in such vigorous representatives as the Prime Minister and the new peer, whose title is intended, rightly or wrongly, to stand in the

place of the laurel crown of the old poets, but vanishing on all sides into the realms of history, is, as nearest to ourselves, of the greatest interest to us; and here are two books which illustrate, with singular force, the special character which has made it remarkable. There could not well be two individuals more unlike than James Robert Hope and Frederick Denison Maurice. They were directly opposed to each other on some public questions, and on all practical matters as profoundly different as two men could be; yet both so pervaded by one purpose and interest that in their very unlikeness this intimate harmony, this similarity of inspiration, makes the great wave of human character to which both belong more clearly apparent.

Their generation is one which has showed itself more entirely occupied by religious or rather theological sentiment and thought than any other since the period of the Reformation. Politics even, the most pre-eminently absorbing of all subjects, were interesting to it chiefly as they affected the profounder questions of belief, the ecclesiastical economy or theories of morals in which it found human welfare to be entirely bound up. The age of Newman has in this respect a character little less distinct than the age of Luther. It has not, indeed, produced the same enormous results. The leaders of the movement were not men of the com-

manding genius and robust physical fibre which are necessary to overturn a world. They were adapted rather for another kind of work—that of influencing the minds of the educated classes, and introducing into the general strain of thought a new and living element, by means of which much that had been considered antiquated and obsolete became once more new and of the first importance, and the concerns of the Church recovered all the interest of her earlier days. It seemed for a time as if Cardinal Newman and his coadjutors might have so shaken the system of religious development in England as to turn back into the channels of the ancient faith that flood of English piety in which there had always remained much of the tradition of older forms, and which has flowed forth to the very ends of the earth, carrying everywhere its distinctive characteristics. There was a moment when the Church of Rome felt her triumph almost certain, and everything that was Protestant in England arose in wrath and fear; and though, when the high tide ebbed, it was discovered that if, here and there, some wealthy harvest had been carried away, or some tower been undermined, the features of the landscape were little changed—there still remained and have remained a new impression, a changed aspect, an influence far less powerful yet more subtle than the great popular movements which can be called Reformation or Revolution. The two men whose lives are now placed before the world present before us the direct and indirect results of this great wave of influence. They represent both sides of that fine impulse to which the larger body of humanity is impervious, whose

workings can affect the general world only by the slower processes carried out through secondary agencies, by means of those workers to whom we may be permitted to give the title of the sons of the prophets.

Cardinal Newman himself is but one of the elder brethren of this band. He is no Elijah, turning the heart of a nation in a day. But he has turned many human intellects and inspired many elevated imaginations, and in one way or another affected the general mind of his time. So did the man of more distinctive prophetic character than Newman, whose light went astray in the darkness and did not fulfil its great promise, yet threw many a suggestive gleam upon the heretofore unrealised and uncomprehended—Edward Irving. A tone of thought exclusively directed to subjects of religious importance, or rather to the contemplation of all things in a religious light, a disposition to subordinate everything outside and mundane to spiritual influences, to the sway of the Church, to the more or less abstract rule of absolute right and wrong, is thus the distinction above all others of the past or passing generation. The heat of politics lessened under their sway. The advancement of ecclesiastical power, the schemes of philanthropy, the thousand theories of doing good to humanity—of which so many have broken down under the test of practical use—became the foremost objects in their horizon. Long peace and freedom from the excitements of national danger no doubt enhanced the power of this abstract tendency; but it animated with a singular unanimity all sorts and conditions of men.

Along with this general tendency

of thought, and partly dependent upon it, the past generation was endowed with a power and volubility of expression which is becoming more and more rare among us. The penny post is supposed to have destroyed the art of letter-writing. But even after the invention of that modern aid to literature, the Maurices to their last days wrote to each other long pamphlets full of theological discussion; and if Mr Hope's letters are less long, they have the same peculiarity of devotion to intellectual and religious subjects only. The life of every day, the human features which are so dear to the ordinary reader, peep out but seldom in the prolonged and enormous correspondence which their biographers unfold before us. Mr Maurice must have written in a year much more than St Paul did in all his wanderings, without even the little break of an inquiry after the old cloak or few books left behind him to remind us of the flesh and blood in which he was clothed like other men. The living instance of boundless capacity for intellectual discussion and a flow of language without limit, which remains in the person of Mr Gladstone, still illustrates the prevailing tendency of the generation now so nearly past.

The books before us have neither of them the advantage of great literary skill. The biographer of Mr Maurice has avoided, by plan and intention, any prolonged appearance in his own person, or attempt to give a portrait of his father. He has left the subject of the memoir to evolve his own remarkable, we might say peculiar mind (for to speak of telling his story would be a vain form) in his own words,—which is, we think, in some degree a mistaken idea, although one quite comprehensible and natural. The

biographer of Mr Hope Scott has done a great deal worse. He has made his memoir of a man whom everybody acknowledges to have been an eminent figure in society—a great lawyer, distinguished by unusual gifts and graces of every kind, and the friend of some of the greatest men of his age—into the story of a proselyte,—a story scarcely less elevated in detail than the account in a tract of the perfections of another kind of convert. A resemblance so marked between two large volumes dedicated to one of the most striking personages of his time and the little badly printed broadsheet of the district visitor, is somewhat undignified and ruefully comic. The Church of Rome has had a great many wise and noble advocates. She has a great deal that operates for her most powerfully in the calm of a Catholic country undisturbed by polemics, and in the evident devotion of the masses who frequent her churches everywhere, as, alas! they do not frequent the churches anywhere of the Reformed faith. But she has enemies unthought of in her zealous converts, and in the historians who record all the exaggerations of their new-born faith, and chronicle their escape out of the heretic community which has trained them to be good Christians and worthy men, as the conversion of the heroes of the coal-pits and slums is chronicled in the literature presided over by General Booth. The Catholic writes better English than the 'War Cry,' and is more polite in his manners, but he is neither more charitable nor less narrow. And the unconscious and unintentional way in which he betrays to us the rigid machinery and contracted circle of the pious society into which his subject is absorbed,

the atmosphere of religious complacency and superiority to other men which surrounds him, and the spiritual guides who throng about him, is curiously but uncomfortably instructive. The intimate records of the Positivist faith, which is held by none but philosophers and the most intellectual class of superior persons, are marked by the same sectarianism and contraction; and the homely and old-fashioned Christian may be permitted a certain pleasure in the discovery that the last and most infallible of our teachers are but men. But in the great Catholic communion—the Church which has so many claims to be called universal, and which asserts for itself so many more—it is dismal indeed to come back to the little familiar round, the limited atmosphere, the sense of not being as other men are, which we had hoped were confined to the sects. There could be no better thing for the preservation of that Protestant principle which is so much out of repute in our days, than the publication of such books as Mr Ornsby's,—but it is unfortunate for the cause he means to maintain.

James Robert Hope came of one of the most notable families in Scotland, and entered the world with everything in his favour, both antecedents and possessions, the son of a genial and distinguished old soldier, and himself one of the very favourites of nature, handsome, gracious, winning, of the most amiable disposition, and with manners which nobody could resist. Yet with all the splendid qualities which universal consent attributes to him, his figure, as it now stands before us, detached by death from all further possibilities of development, is strangely mysterious

and paradoxical. He was a man whom everybody knew and admired, yet who baffled all the expectations of those who knew him—a man of almost boundless success, yet a standing disappointment, if not to himself (which most probably was the case), at least to his friends: great in strength, tenacity, and perseverance, yet broken in two by means that seem to the speculator entirely inadequate to the result: full of the highest aspirations, yet choosing for his life's work a branch of his profession in which principle was scarcely necessary at all, and honesty itself became a matter of opinion. In everything he was a paradox: the most friendly, genial, and sympathetic of men, yet rigid as the gloomiest bigot; open to every charity, yet steadily shutting out from Christian brotherhood all who disagreed with him, even while he recognised their admirable qualities; indifferent to wealth, yet wearing himself out in work scarcely more than ignoble in order to increase it. Were it possible to expose such a soul to moral vivisection, what secrets of human nature might come out under the knife! but fortunately that kind of anatomy is possible only in cases where the victim has himself laid open the movements of his pulses, and Mr Hope Scott was a man of great reserve, and did not leave behind him the means of such an examination. He stands before us a mysterious figure, veiled in a sort of pathetic non-fulfilment, which is all the more curious that he was, so far as the world goes, a successful and entirely prosperous man.

This paradoxical character begins with his youth. In Oxford he neither obtained nor sought

classical honours, but, nevertheless, by the means then in operation of private interest and favour, backed by unbounded popularity, gained one of the favourite rewards of learning, and was elected a Fellow of Merton before he was twenty. Thus fortune at once declared herself in favour of the beautiful, delightful, all conquering youth. These epithets are not more enthusiastic than those bestowed upon him in sober earnest by his contemporaries. Admiration followed him wherever he went. And he was good as well as beautiful. The phrases which are sacred to the use of angelic women have to be resorted to in describing the good works, the tender beneficence, the charity and kindness of this noble young man, who watched over the declining days of a faithful servant, and carried consolation and good cheer to the humblest sick rooms, while moving like a young Apollo through the realms of learning and of fashion, winning hearts and laurels everywhere. In the midst of all this success and applause he decided to give up the world and become a clergyman,—a resolution which his parents willingly consented to, his determination and their approval being conveyed in a series of somewhat elaborate letters, the young man arguing perhaps a little too much in favour of his plan, while, on the other side, Sir Alexander Hope replies, “deliberately giving a father’s opinion that the Church is the highest profession that you can embrace;” after which we hear no more of the resolution. Similar argumentations, decisions which come to nothing, high projects suddenly falling into silence, and succeeded by proceedings of a totally different tendency, occur

frequently in his life. His friends endeavour to explain this peculiarity by setting forth the fastidious refinement of his mind and tastes, and a certain sensitive shrinking from the encounter of things disagreeable. It was no doubt partly owing to an impatience of everything conditional and expedient, the high absolutism of idea, which is a feature of the distinctive character of the Scot; and partly one of the methods of making up his own mind, which are so different in different individuals—the very force of the resolution to adopt one way being really a step in the direction of the other, and symbol of a certain stage in the proceedings of the private council-chamber, where all outside pleas were considered before a secret tribunal open to himself alone.

Before as after his temporary self-consecration to the Church, young Hope had studied law with much success and application, and as he was still very young, lost very little time in his preparations for that profession. The choice of a profession, however, important as that is in life, was but a secondary matter in that time of mental excitement and conflict. His circumstances, his residence in Oxford, and his natural turn of mind, all led him towards the party which was then moving the minds of all men from the heart of the University. He had sought acquaintance with Newman early in his career, and had adopted with enthusiasm the life of profound religious devotion, as well as the ecclesiastical principles, of the then Vicar of St Mary’s. His friendship with Mr Gladstone, and with the consistent and adoring friend of all his future life, Mr Badeley, a man but little known in comparison, but whose perpetual

sympathy and devotion attended Hope throughout every vicissitude of his career, dates from the same period. These young men were all moved by the highest motives, by the most genuine enthusiasm. Their conviction that the welfare of England was bound up in the development and increased power of the Church was profound and boundless — a conviction which, perhaps without knowing it, came both to Hope and Gladstone from the Presbyterian ancestors, of whom both were somewhat ashamed, and whose old doctrine of “all for the Kirk, and a little less for the State,” thus reappeared whimsically in the minds of descendants, who considered that Kirk a rabble of sectaries, and their good fathers unbaptised fanatics. This idea has always been to the more worldly part of society, as John Knox’s churchmanship was to the rough statesmen of his time, a “devout imagination”; but perhaps at no period has it been held by men with a more sure standing-ground in the world, or with more power to realise it, if practicable, than the brilliant young Tractarians of 1837 and the following years had. The attempt made by Mr Hope to secure a return, in his own College, to the rules of the monastic society intended by its founder, shows this entirely genuine conviction, unalloyed by any restraining thought of what was practicable or expedient, or by any consideration of the changed character of the times. The view he took of the unalterable authority of the founder, expressed over and over again in his public life, has something noble and loyal in its impracticability.

“The objection,” he says, “that the essential character of the institution is now obsolete and useless, may sound plausible in the mouth of those who,

having the legal, wish also to prove their moral right to interfere with it; but such language, however suited to the founder’s constitutional governors, very ill becomes the founder’s almoners and dependants. They should have thought of it before they became partakers of his bounty, and by an oath resigned their independence into his hands.”

It is curious to note this single-minded endeavour to force the collegiate life back into the channels of the past, after all the sweeping changes in a contrary sense which have been made in Oxford in our own day. What would the young enthusiast have said to baby-perambulators in the honoured quad, and all the smiling little establishments about the Parks? To show the scope of Mr Ornsby’s book, we may quote here his observations upon Hope’s first effort to redevelop Roman Catholic institutions in the bosom of the Anglican Church. “There can be but one opinion,” he tells us, “about the high principle and breadth of view” in Mr Hope’s statement.

“The judgment to be formed on the moral questions involved, of course, does not belong to his biographer; yet it can hardly be passed without remark. The obligation of statutes made in Catholic times on those benefiting by them under very different circumstances, perhaps weighs on the consciences of the present day in Oxford no more than it did on those of the last century, especially after several new *strata* of changes. Yet a difficulty there is, and for every such difficulty there must be a remedy. Protestantism finds one in public opinion and in State legislation; whilst Catholics would have recourse to a final and infallible appeal which can alone set consciences at rest.”

In the meantime, there is less possibility than ever that Oxford will have recourse to that final tribunal: even in the fervour of

the Tractarian excitement, and at the height of Cardinal Newman's influence, the Fellows of Merton do not seem to have taken kindly to the idea of returning to monasticism, and Hope's plan dropped, as his desire to be a clergyman had dropped, and was heard of no more.

About the time when young Hope got his fellowship, a young man of a very different form of mind, but equally devoted to religion and theology, and equally bent upon the ideal Church in the world, came into residence at Oxford. Frederick Denison Maurice came out of a very different *milieu* from that of the noble family, with every kind of expansion of high office and traffic with the world in its atmosphere, which had produced the youthful Fellow of Merton. Yet the Maurices belonged to a kind of aristocracy too, and were as little to be confounded with the common herd as the most favoured race of lords and ladies. A more curious picture than is given of the household out of which he came scarcely exists in literature, and we could have wished that it had lain in Colonel Maurice's way to afford us more details, or a sketch more graphic, of the little company of keen controversialists who must have made the life of the Rev. Michael Maurice, Unitarian minister and deeply exercised father of a thoughtful family, a burden to him. We must note in passing that Colonel Maurice mistakes the meaning of the term Presbyterian, —which, so far as we are aware, refers exclusively to the adherents of a certain form of Church government,—in bestowing it upon the Nonconformists he describes, who expressly repudiated any form of Church government at all. Whether the sufferers by the Act of Uniformity ever adhered to the

Presbyterian economy with any devotion seems doubtful; but at all events, long before the period here treated, every trace of the real meaning of the name had been lost; and as Presbyterianism meant, without doubt, the Presbyterian system, we cannot conceive any right application of the name except to those who hold that system. It does not mean Trinitarians, or believers in the doctrines of predestination, or any other doctrinal belief; but only those who hold by the Presbytery as the parliament of the Church, as against those who believe in bishops as its heaven-appointed rulers.

Neither in this sense, nor in that of the Calvinistic doctrine usually connected with the Presbyterian system, can it be at all an appropriate title for the mild Unitarians, without distinctive creed or confession of any kind, living in absolute independence, each congregation of its neighbour, to whom Mr Michael Maurice belonged. He was a gentle Nonconformist, preaching the genial morals and inconsistent doctrine of the small but not unimportant sect in which there has been at all times so much more intellectual development than general popularity—with a number of clever and remarkable daughters, and a wife somewhat more than his match in theological controversy. One by one these daughters abandoned their father's principles, drawing with them, not by any weakness of the affections, but by force of argument, their mother; so that at last the head of the house was left with his little flock of hearers in his little chapel, which not one of his own family would enter. The house, in which at least one of these independent

women was an almost violent controversialist, and another "a solitary thinker," and in which each took her own way, agreeing only in strong opposition to that of their father, must have been more original than comfortable. The fiery young women converted their mother, they converted their governess, they had themselves rebaptised, which was a grievous shock to the poor minister thus abandoned, and they made the mental atmosphere of their young brother's youth one full of "confusion and contradiction." Frederick Maurice would seem from his earliest days to have possessed one of those almost perfect moral natures to which training is little essential; but on the other side, he was endowed with a mind of so peculiar a cast, that the support of early and steady discipline, and a strong prop of authority, might have saved him many an after-struggle. Brought up in a family where such convulsions were going on, where the different members of the house wrote long letters to each other on their points of difference, and where the controversies of theological belief took the part of all those gentle nothings, the family talk, the soft follies and laughter, which have so much to do with the healthfulness as well as the happiness of common life—the tendencies of a spirit naturally timid yet impetuous, full of hesitations yet tenacity, and giving itself endless trouble in the conscientious and minute working out of every difficulty presented to it, gained additional strength. He had gone through a labyrinth of self-questioning, of hesitating advances, retirements, doubts, mental trials of all kinds, before he reached Oxford. He had gone in the first place to Cambridge, where his career was remarkable, and where

his influence was already acknowledged as of more than ordinary potency, but left that University without taking his degree, the necessity for a profession of faith before doing so being too great a difficulty to be overcome at the moment—for his mind had long before begun to work round in the laborious and conscientious way natural to him towards the Church of England. But either his intellectual processes were slower than those carried on in the minds of his sisters, or he was more reluctant than they were to disappoint his father's hopes. He left Cambridge accordingly, and went to London, where he read law, and plunged into literature, in which he would seem to have been so far successful as to keep himself afloat without achieving anything like popularity or success. Shyness of manner and reserve added to the timidity of his mind, and increased the unassured and doubtful self-consciousness which is sometimes called humility. "He will not suppose that any one forms a good opinion of him, and *really* desires his company," says his father. Five years, however, of this unsatisfactory life, succeeded in maturing the opinions and designs which had been slowly forming in his mind, and at twenty-five he went to Oxford to qualify for his degree, with the distinct intention of taking orders as a clergyman of the Church of England. It would appear, from the burst of too superlative satisfaction with which his sick and dying sister Emma hailed the conclusion of a novel he had written amid his other literary industries at this period, that he had seemed to his family to be wanting in capacity for sustained effort. She speaks of the "hope which gave place to

certainly last night that you could finish something," with a feverish exaltation, being then very near the end of her life. It is curious that family doubts and fears, sometimes so oddly uncharacteristic, should have hit upon such an apprehension as this in respect to so tenacious a mind. The novel, it is to be supposed, fell still-born.

These were the days when Newman was supreme in Oxford, but he scarcely seems to have crossed the path of the serious and somewhat heavily burdened new-comer, whose desire was above all for unity, but whose training and disposition were little likely to lead him towards the fashion of Catholicism, then growing into influence day by day. Maurice came to Oxford with something of the prestige of his Cambridge successes about him. Mr Gladstone records that he received from Cambridge "letters from many friends, perhaps chiefly from Arthur Hallam, full of the most unbounded admiration" for him; but it would not seem that the effect produced on further acquaintance was equal to the introduction. Perhaps his anxious, slowly working, much-revolving mind had little in common with the enthusiastic students of the past, whose conclusions were more readily come at, and who indeed, granting the justice of their first steps, were drawn along by a logic almost irresistible. While they turned with delight and the ardour of newly awakened sentiment to the devout imaginations of the Catholic ages, the ideal of an unbroken line of apostolical succession, and the beautiful institutions of more primitive times, he began in his elaborate way to reason out the question. He too had seized with eagerness upon the ideal of

the Church, in which he found a grateful relief from the rampant individualism of his early surroundings; and to reconcile with the principles of Protestantism its Catholic character, was one of the first subjects upon which his mind employed itself. The conclusions at which he arrived were conveyed in endless letters, as his custom was. He made out to his own satisfaction by these reasonings that Protestantism was not a term to apply to the Church; that the Church is Christian only, teaching the faith without controversy, uniting all elements of truth; but that the nation is Protestant, resisting all attempts to interfere, at once with the supreme authority of God and the secondary power of the monarch, by the interposition of any vicar of Christ or infallible authority between. The nature of the mind which could not be satisfied without finding some broad if visionary foundation of reason by which to recommend them to others, and which for its most earnest convictions works round and round its subject, not without an unconscious subtlety in seizing upon arguments to prove its theory, yet with the most thorough and laborious conscientiousness, is apparent at once in this argument. Maurice's first publication in the polemical vein, the pamphlet called "Subscription no Bondage," in which he set himself to prove the paradox that a higher freedom was involved in certain understood conditions than in the lawlessness of no creed at all, shows the same laborious method. It was written in opposition to the first attempt at abolishing subscription in the Universities, and was the result of the processes of thought by which he had worked himself free from the imbroglia of his early days.

This publication was for the moment useful to the High Church party, and was received by them with momentary if somewhat doubting and uncertain interest. There is, we may remark by the way, something equally characteristic and full of unconscious humour in the precaution he took, in respect to his theory of Protestantism, of accompanying his very long letter to Dr Acland in which it is worked out, with a shorter one containing a summary of its arguments: "As I scarcely expect that you will have leisure, inclination, or ability to read the long MS. I send you, I will just set down the heads of it in this note, that my purpose in writing it may not be altogether defeated"! Nothing could be more quaint than such a proceeding, but nothing more characteristic of the man.

We may add here, before passing to the other branch of the subject, Maurice's confession of what seemed to him the Catholic faith—

"I should wish to live and die for the assertion of this truth: that the Universal Church is just as much a reality as any particular nation is; that the latter can only be believed real as one believes in the former; that the Church is the witness for the true constitution of man as man, a child of God, an heir of heaven, and taking up his freedom by baptism; that the world is a miserable, accursed, rebellious order which denies this foundation, which will create a foundation of self-will, choice, taste, opinion; that in the world there can be no communion; that in the Church there can be universal communion, communion in one body by one spirit. For this our Church of England is now, as I think, the only firm consistent witness. If God will raise up another in Germany or elsewhere, thanks be to Him for it: but for the sake of Germans, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians; for the sake of Baptists, Indepen-

dents, Quakers, Unitarians; for the sake of Jews, Turks, Infidels; for the sake of Men, I will hold fast by that Church which alone stands forth and upholds universal brotherhood, on the only basis on which brotherhood is possible."

About the same period young Hope of Merton had begun to make himself visible on his side of the ideal Church, by a protest against the existence of missionary societies apart from the Church, which is "the original and rightful missionary society," and a proposal that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (the S.P.G., as it is called in ecclesiastical slang) should be recognised as a committee of the Church instead of a separate association, which may seem a distinction without a difference to the reader, but which meant at that moment the concentration of everything in the visible framework of a Catholic unity which was leading to more important issues. We are tempted to quote the reflections of the biographer on this point, if not for their wisdom, yet for the splendour of their assumptions. Mr Ornsby considers Hope's proposal as the proof of no ordinary character, but of one which would have come to very little "had he missed the grace of conversion." "He was quite unconsciously as yet having a glimmer of the faith, and attempting to find a sort of artificial Catholicity or universality in the amalgamation of these societies on the wide-spreading British colonial system." But, "as he was unprovided as yet with the real key to Church history"—viz., the position of the See of Peter—"his conceptions could not but be crude and full of error." Nothing could be more offensive than the manner in which these explanations are given. We will

allow, however, that there is a certain justice in them; for Hope's conception of catholicity was already that of the Church of Rome; and as all his efforts were connected with the external organisations and economy of the Church of England, so as to demonstrate its claim to the same character, the logic of the matter could scarcely fail to be in the hands of the older and far more complete organisation.

Mr Hope's "well-meant reforms"—that is, his strenuous efforts to turn the stream of English life into the channels of the past—though they did not succeed in permanently making into monks the Fellows of Merton, and did not produce any important change in the character of the missionary societies (though their results in this case his biographer does not feel important enough to inquire into), came to a real issue of importance in the foundation of the great Episcopalian school of Scotland, the College at Glenalmond. His correspondence on this subject with Mr Gladstone, his coadjutor in the scheme, is very curious. According to his desire, the school, which has now become an important public institution in Scotland, was to be founded in the same spirit in which Henry VI. founded Eton, as a nursery for the clergy; and his anxious plans for keeping apart the boys intended for holy orders, and shutting up those unfortunate little Levites in the atmosphere of a Catholic seminary from which all natural influences should be excluded, are a remarkable proof of the determined bias which his mind had taken. The object of his first endeavour was to find a way of solving the problem, "How the clergy shall receive a strict clerical education in contact with, and yet without being secularised by, the

laity." The separation was to take place at the age of twelve or thirteen, after which the boys intended for the Church were to remain apart, the elder and the younger together, and to be specially trained for their future profession, "instructed in chanting," made "to wear surplices in chapel and read the lessons, to have shorter vacations, and be made to feel throughout that they are under a different discipline." This suggestion, so entirely against all the traditions and prejudices of English, not to say Scottish training, was combated by Mr Gladstone, and, so far as we are aware, never passed into a rule; but it is a curious attempt to translate his antiquarian views into practice, and pour the new wine into old bottles. His indifference to "the laity," while forming those anxious rules for the boys destined for holy orders, is remarkable. He would allow them to stay (with a half contemptuous tolerance) till they were fifteen; after that, if they insisted, a separate establishment should be founded for them, "with power of frequenting the lectures and chapel, but otherwise no part of the college." When the institution for which he had done so much was finally completed, Hope's name was left out of the list of governors—a slight which he would seem to have felt deeply. And fortunately his system of separation was not adopted. He did succeed, however, it would appear, in introducing a degree of *surveillance* quite foreign to the character of an English public school; but we can scarcely believe that this has remained a feature of a popular and successful institution.

While he was thus struggling for the restoration of rules and systems long discarded, the follow-

ing singular anecdote will show how his Catholic aspirations affected his mind towards individuals not of his own way of thinking. The barrister with whom he had first begun to read law was a Mr Hodgkin, a lawyer of considerable reputation in his profession, a good man, whom Hope had every reason to respect and esteem, and for whom he entertained the most friendly sentiments. But he was a Quaker, and as such beyond the pale. This is what happened when Hope went to pay a visit to this good and pious man:—

“He took me aside and strolled with me in the garden in order to relieve his conscience of a little burden in nearly the words following: ‘I suppose you will be reading to your family and the servants in the morning, and if you will excuse me, I should prefer retiring to my own room whilst you are so engaged.’ I thanked him for his frankness, and assured him that I should much prefer his doing just that which was the most agreeable to his own feelings, but that in all probability all that would take place would be the reading of a chapter from the authorised version of the New Testament; for I fancied it might be a Dissenter’s prayer that might be the stumbling-block. He said, ‘I thought it likely that *that* would be the case, but still it is in some sort as a religious teacher that you assemble your family, and with my views of Apostolical Succession, and especially considering that you are an unbaptised person, I should not feel easy to participate in the service.’ I replied that I understood him, but that he would not be surprised that I could not on this account give up a practice which I believed to be my duty, and I only regretted that I did so little for the religious benefit of my family, my friends, and my neighbours. This strong though perfectly polite expression of his views was the more remarkable, as he had formed quite an exaggerated estimate of any moral or even religious qualities which he

supposed me to possess, though ecclesiastically I was such a heathen.”

Thus what he called “the encampment of the Church pitched after the model set by her first captains,” excluded rigorously, as if they had been so many infidels, men whom no one could deny to be followers of the great Captain of all. Such a conviction, when it enters the mind, is beyond all reach of reason, and perhaps is held all the more strongly that, abhorrent as it is to the true spirit of human and Christian brotherhood, it must be a martyrdom to the true believer to hold it. He was still very young, however, when he thus, with the best intentions, insulted the good Quaker, and did his utmost to make the new public school into a seminary of unnatural little priests; and he was by nature the last man in the world to insult any man, having been born with a golden mouth from which persuasion flowed, and possessing a power of making himself beloved, and winning the hearts of those with whom he was brought in contact, which, as all who knew bear record, was unparalleled.

Hope was but twenty-eight when he made his first great step in life. His well known views on ecclesiastical matters and his great abilities had caused him to be chosen junior counsel for the cathedral chapters, when the “Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill,” the purpose of which was to cut down the incomes of the chapters by way of increasing poor livings and adding to the number of the clergy, was under discussion before the House of Lords. On this subject his soul was all aflame, and in the same spirit with which he had urged upon his college the fulfilment of their founder’s statutes,

he addressed the peers of England, with an added strain of lofty indignation, as to what he declared to be a breach of national faith and British honour in thus attempting to withdraw from their original use the funds left for certain sacred purposes, by men long dead and powerless to protect themselves. "Had the word of the nation," he cries, "been pledged with one half of the earnestness with which a continued course of legislation has pledged that word to these founders, and in reliance upon which they went to their rest—had you, I say, made such distinct promises to another country, would you not have kept these promises? You would, for you would have feared their armies. Had you done so to the national creditor, you would have kept them, for you might have feared that the public credit would suffer. But these men have gone to their graves; their voices are silent, they cannot complain; their arms are nerveless, they cannot be raised to threaten you; you have nothing more to hope from them, and nothing to fear; and *therefore* you will not keep your plighted word with them." Notwithstanding the eloquence and passionate earnestness of the appeal, the argument does not strike us as very convincing, falling altogether short as it does of the real question: nor is it original, but as old as the ever-recurring struggle on the subject of legacies and gifts to the Church, which has occurred in every Catholic country. But the effect it is said to have produced, enhanced no doubt by that personal fascination of the speaker of which we hear so much, and by the excited atmosphere of the times, was extraordinary. "Lord Brougham, at the conclusion of the speech, emphati-

cally exclaimed, 'That young man's fortune is made!'" Mr Gladstone, no mean authority on such a subject, speaks of himself as "a hearer and a rapt hearer" of this address, and adds: "I need not say that during the last forty years I have heard many speeches, and many, too, in which I had reason to take interest, and yet never one which, by its solid as well as by its winning qualities, more powerfully impressed me." A chorus of praise rose from all sides, and fame and fortune were in a moment at the young barrister's command. He chose that occasion to set out on a long tour, chiefly of ecclesiastical study and discovery, in Italy, leaving both fortune and fame behind, and throughout his long professional career never appeared as the advocate or defender of any great public question again.

By this time, however, his thoughts, following the great sweep and current of impulse which came from his friend and leader, were daily nearing the ancient channels of the faith, as it began to grow apparent that there was a barrier not to be surmounted between the utmost possibility of Catholicism attainable in England and the ancient Catholicism of Rome. The effort to "pitch the encampment of the Church after the model set by her best captains" was met by incessant disappointment; and the longing of the eager minds which followed, and sometimes in their ardour anticipated, the decision of Newman, grew all the more intense by every hindrance. Hope's time and thoughts seem to have been entirely taken up during his Italian journeys with study and observation of the economy of the Roman Church. Rome itself had, as it has upon most ardent and enthusiastic students, a slightly damp-

ing effect. "The finished solemnities of the Sistine Chapel affected him less than a rude midnight mass of Carthusians," his biographer observes; and this will be readily understood by the imaginative reader. "But what did affect him was the coherent system and organisation of Rome—the exactness of law and doctrine, the completeness of theory, the careful adjustment of details, and the steady adherence to what was laid down. With these it made him uneasy and dissatisfied to compare the loose rule-of-thumb procedure which are characteristic of everything English." His mind full of this impression, so natural to a lawyer, he returned home, to be encountered by a scheme which, in the oblivion and ineffectiveness into which it has fallen, it is startling to hear of as instrumental in bringing about such great results. This was the curious whim of foreign invention—the scheme of the ever alert and busy Bunsen for smuggling Episcopacy into the Lutheran Church, and knitting an additional bond between England and Prussia by the manufacture of a joint-bishopric at Jerusalem. No project, perhaps, ever fell more dead when carried out; but the real consequences were not those which concerned Bishop Gobat's appointment. That the Church of England—that one worthy successor of the Apostles, in the adoring conception of the Oxford Churchmen, more Catholic than the most Catholic, *i.e.*, more sternly exclusive of every illegitimate development of Christianity—should hold out a hand to Lutheranism, and receive under her shadow and protection congregations of German schismatics, was too intolerable to be thought of. At the first blush, indeed, Dr Pusey had been seduced

into sympathy with the scheme, under the idea that it "was one for bringing the Prussians at Jerusalem by legitimate ecclesiastical means into the Church of England." And, looking at it in this light, Hope also was led into giving his advice in the drawing out of the Bill, and at its first-outset into lending his countenance to the design, although suspicious and doubtful from the first. The description by Mr Gladstone of the scheme altogether may be quoted, as giving not only a conception of its character, but also a brief and vivid sketch of another remarkable individual—one more instance of the warm theological bias, and boundless capacity for intellectual occupation, characteristic of the time.

"About this time Baron Bunsen became the representative of Prussia at the British court. I remember that your father used to strike me by his suspicions and apprehensions of particular persons, and Bunsen, if I recollect right, was among them. That distinguished person felt an immense interest in England: he was of a pious and enthusiastic mind, a mind of almost preternatural activity, vivacity, and rapidity, a bright imagination, and a wide rather than a deep range of knowledge. He was in the strongest sympathy, both personal and ecclesiastical, with the then reigning King of Prussia, who visited England in the autumn, I think, of 1841. Sir Robert Peel, however loyal to the *entente* with France, had a strong desire for close relations of friendship with Germany, and the marriage of the Queen then recent told in the same sense. All these circumstances opened the way for the singular project of the Anglican bishopric of Jerusalem, which I believe to have been the child of Bunsen's fertile and energetic brain. . . . Wide as was the range of Bunsen's subsequent changes, he at this time represented the opinion of the Evangelical German Church, with the strong leaning of an

amateur towards the Episcopate as a form of government, not as the vehicle of the continuous corporate and visible life of the Christian Church. He had beyond all men I ever knew the faculty of persuading himself that he had reconciled opposites; and this persuasion he entertained with such fervour that it became contagious.

It was thus that "this really fantastic plan" came into being; and it is extremely interesting to mark the different minds and natures thus brought into momentary and disturbed sympathy in the midst of these instructive oppositions. The plausible effusive German, with that touch of the sentimental peculiar to his race, in a rush and flow of universal sympathy, vanity, desire to please, and determination to do great things, pouring forth floods of amiable enthusiasm; while the Englishmen stood round, half melted, half defiant. "The amateur leaning towards the Episcopate" would be almost more offensive to those high defenders of the Apostolical Succession than a rude Dissenter's hatred of it. "My opinion is (I put it no higher)," Mr Gladstone adds, "that the Jerusalem Bishopric snapped the link which bound Dr Newman to the English Church." What great results from little causes spring! The reader of the present day who has not examined this period of history, and who is not old enough to remember the commotion of the moment, will scarcely know, without explanation, what the Jerusalem Bishopric means. Even those to whom it has produced, or helped to produce, consequences so momentous, would probably now be at some loss to say whether it still existed. It was never in itself of the slightest practical importance, and within a few years was as if it had never

been. Yet it was important enough at the moment to determine the life of some of the most remarkable men of the generation. The reader will, no doubt, take refuge in the thought that if not that, then something else, probably not greater in itself, would have given the needed impulse—and very likely this is true. Yet it is an extraordinary instance of the short sight and mistaken conception of magnitudes, which is common to the most enlightened as to the least, that a scheme which one of the actors involved in it now characterises as fantastic, should have precipitated the greatest convulsion which for centuries the Church of England has known.

Maurice, as might have been expected, took an entirely different view, and threw himself with enthusiasm into the scheme. He was then chaplain of Guy's Hospital, and lecturer at King's College, working hard in both spheres, and as usual employing every moment of his leisure in burrowing about the roots of doctrine, and conveying the results of his minute and elaborate researches in letters twenty pages long, which it seems enough occupation to write without anything more. His view, it must be allowed, is much more difficult to keep in one's mind than the concise belief on the other side. The elaborate distinctions which he draws between the ground of unity and that of difference, confuse the reader in circles of reasoning not too distinct in themselves, and involving so many subtleties of meaning, that a plain intellect is often baffled in following them. The object of his warmest aspirations, like that of those with whom he was now in instinctive opposition on all points, was catholicity—but a catholicity

so different, that all possibility even of mutual understanding was impossible. That his views, however, were not at all latitudinarian, and that in his own way he could be as intolerant in expression as the highest Anglican, the following statement of both sides of the question will testify.

"I have endeavoured in my tracts to prove that if Christ be really the head of every man, and if he really have taken human flesh, there is ground for a universal fellowship among men. I have asserted that it is the business of the Church to assert this ground of universal fellowship; that it ought to make men understand and feel how possible it is for men as men to fraternise in Christ; how impossible it is to fraternise except in Him. Now, the denial of a universal Head is practically the denial of all communion in society. This universal fellowship in Christ I believe that the Church of England asserts by its ordinances; and believing this (rightly or wrongly), I feel that *I am bound*, as a good member of that Church, not to narrow my hours of intercourse or fellowship. I meet men as men because I feel that I have a ground on which I can meet them, and that this is the deepest, safest ground of all. . . . If the person whom I thus meet fraternises elsewhere on another principle, that is nothing to me. Still less does it signify to me that he may support in conversation certain theological theses to which I cannot assent, or may deny doctrines which I hold very earnestly. I should make no compromise, I should hope to be enabled to tell him honestly what I think, but my friendship with him would not be interrupted; or if it were, I should attribute the breach to my infirmity of temper, and not boast of it as a sacrifice to duty. . . . But if the same person said to me, 'Let us meet to-morrow at some meeting of the Bible Society. I am an Independent, or a Baptist, or a Quaker; you, I know, are an Episcopalian, but let us forget our differences and meet

on the ground of our common Christianity;' I should say instantly, 'I will do no such thing. I consider that your whole scheme is a flat contradiction and a lie. You come forward with an avowal that you fraternise on some other ground than that of our union in Christ, and then you ask me to fraternise with you on that ground. I consider your sects, one and all of them, as an outrage on the Christian principle—as a denial of it. And what is the common Christianity of which you speak? The mere *caput mortuum* of all systems! You do not really mean us to unite in Christ as being members of His body; you mean us to unite in holding certain notions *about* Christ, just as you hold certain peculiar notions about baptism,' &c.

We confess that after reading the above, our head goes round: we feel that the unfortunate schismatic who has proffered a common Christianity as a ground of union is hardly used, and must be as confused as we are by this sudden anathema, this thunderbolt bursting from the mildest blue. The principle on the other side which says incisively, "If you have not the apostolical succession you are heathens and publicans, beyond the pale of Christian fellowship altogether," has at least the merit of being more comprehensible.

Mr Maurice therefore supported—not on the ground of a common Christianity, but on the ground of the union of all men in Christ, which no doubt would have led him to receive an enlightened Parsee on the same platform with Baron Bunsen—the scheme of the Jerusalem bishopric, and issued a pamphlet in favour of, as Mr Hope published one against it. They were thus brought into actual contact, for the only time in their history,—Maurice's pamphlet giving occasion for an eloquent

passage in Hope's, in defence of canon law, which the other had spoken of contemptuously. The thoughts as well as the actions of the two men were in instinctive antagonism. It would probably have been impossible for them to have looked at any subject from the same point of view; but they were both devoted to what each called the Church, with an enthusiasm which knew no limit, though in the sense of one it was a definite corporation, with infallible and unchanging laws and ordinances, and in that of the other a vague and universal communion of spirits, which words scarcely serve to define.

At this point the human element in Mr Hope's life comes into view, and claims all our interest. Maurice continues for years his theological investigations, explaining, describing, opening out with endless earnestness and patience his conceptions of truth. Even his most intimate domestic letters, so far as presented to the reader, bear the character of theological essays, and the touch of nature which is so necessary to secure the sympathy of ordinary human creatures is almost entirely left out, although in the meantime he marries, has children born to him, and enters into all the ordinary round of life. But perhaps Colonel Maurice has judged rightly, for his father's nature had much of the abstract in it, and, there can be no doubt, was more profoundly and constantly occupied by the processes of thought than is at all usual even with men of high intellect. We who do not stand on that elevation long for a little green spot, a touch of human imperfection, even a little levity, or an infinitesimal error, to make us feel the object of the narrative

to be flesh and blood like ourselves. But Hope acquires at this period of his life the interest not only of a man discouraged and baffled in his dearest objects, and brought face to face with a possible crisis of the most painful meaning, but also of a mystery of the strangest kind, which all the penetration of the critic endeavours in vain to fathom. Why, after opening his career with one brilliant performance in the highest branch of his profession, did he suddenly disappear from the sight of men, and give himself up to the passing of railway bills in some dingy committee-room of the House of Commons? Why did he abandon the higher walks and pick up out of the dust the tool which was to shape all his professional life? Why did he lay aside his high aspirations, his self-consecration to the most sacred cause, and spend his life in persuading, alarming, convincing, throwing dust in the eyes of half-a-dozen obscure gentlemen in furtherance of the most modern and mundane of all enterprises? To these questions there is no reply. He said that he meant to make of his profession his cabbage-field, and of other studies his flower-garden; but his other studies never came to any result, and his life was wholly (and most profitably) occupied by the hard work—well rewarded in one sense, but in another without recompense, as it was without moral desert—which he thus chose as the occupation of his existence. There are various reasons alleged for this curious anti-climax. Cardinal Newman, with a remarkable mixture of praise and apology, rather repeats the question than supplies any reply to it:—

“That a young man of bold, large enterprising mind, of popular talents

of conscious power, with initial successes, with great opportunities—one who carried with him the goodwill and expectation of bystanders, and was cheered on by them to a great future—that he should be dead to his own manifest interests, that he should be unequal to the occasion, that he should be so false to his destiny, that his ethical nature should be so little in keeping with his gifts of mind—may easily be represented not only as strange, but as a positive defect, or even a fault.” But he adds: “It must be recollected that in public life a man of elevated mind does not make his own self tell upon others simply and entirely. He is obliged to move in a groove. He must act with other men: he cannot select his objects or pursue them by means unadulterated by the methods and practices of minds less elevated than his own. He can only do what he feels to be second best.”

This is no reason, nor even a defence: it is an apology, and no more. It is as if a man were to say, Because I can only work under limitations and not absolutely according to my own ideal, therefore I will take that work which has the least meaning, is the most purely material, and is the least elevated that can be found. And if we may venture the conjecture, this or something like this must have been in Mr Hope's heart when he selected the occupation which was to win him fortune, and after a sort fame. If he could not have his own way, and achieve his favourite ends, and realise his ideal, which was entirely concerned with the development of the Church, what did it matter what he did? the first thing that came to hand, ignoble if you please, that affected him no longer, seeing that his real scope, the best meaning that was in him, was baffled for ever. There is something pathetic, pitiful, almost tragic, in the determined plunge he

made into work which had no moral significance at all, in which no principles were involved, which was mere matter of expediency, of money, of purely external effort. An advocate's trade of making the worse appear the better cause, if it has much that is equivocal in it, when it only aims at making one line of railway appear more desirable than another, loses, with its moral responsibility, all its weight and dignity. Life had still much that was agreeable, much that was happy; and no doubt, as every man learns to enjoy what he is conscious of doing well, Mr Hope found pleasure and excitement in his work, such as it was. But yet it appears to us that only a kind of despair could have driven him into it, and that all the higher enjoyments and aspirations of life were quenched in him when he flung away the hopes that his friends at large had entertained, and devoted himself to what is called the Parliamentary bar, for life.

However, the best chapter by far in the biography is that which describes his occupations and progress there. The admirable sketch of him contributed by Mr Venables is of the highest interest, and Mr Ornsby himself forgets for once his polemics, and gives an excellent account of his endless activity, his brilliant skill and care in his work, and his most important cases—cases entirely devoid of any human or moral interest, yet demanding much mastery of the subject, and much power in convincing and interesting the judges. Our space does not allow anything more than an allusion to this work, neither does it come within the scope of these observations. But to our own thinking the after-course of Mr Hope's life in losing the spring

of early effort and the one inspiration that could have brought it to full development, is in a lower key, a minor tone. It is the life of a disappointed and disappointing man. That he went over to the Church of Rome seems an event of inferior importance. The heart seems to have gone out of him when he allowed to himself that the Anglican Church could not be any longer his model of Catholic faith, and that nothing he could do would suffice to lead her back into the right way. With many of his clerical companions in the same career, a similar result seems to have followed—a dropping into insignificance, into the common life which they had despised, into a subdued and permanently dim condition of being. It seems extraordinary to say this of a man who lived and prospered for half a lifetime after—who loved and married, occupied a brilliant position in society, exercised great influence, and was altogether a most notable and remarkable personage; and yet we think it is true.

Mr Hope's marriage took place some years after this climax and anti-climax of his life. Mr Ormsby here is quite equal to the occasion, and comes in with that solemn unconsciousness of the ludicrous which the reader has before remarked in him. In the opinion of this sage, the Jerusalem bishopric was the primary cause of his hero's marriage,—“the news of which step,” he gravely tells us, “is known to have fallen like a knell on the minds of those who looked up to him and shared his religious feelings, as it appeared a sign that he no longer thought the ideal perfection presented by the celibate life—which he certainly contemplated in 1840-41—was congenial with the spirit of the Church

of England.” We have never understood that a celibate laity was considered desirable even by Rome herself, or by anybody, indeed, except Mr Malthus, whose theories have very little to do with Catholic perfection. If it were not so entirely ludicrous, the suggestion would be highly offensive; and the biographer's patronage of Mrs Hope Scott, and condescending record of her gentle excellence, is actually so, when we recollect all that was embodied in that fragile representative of so much genius and power—Lockhart's daughter, Scott's grandchild, the last of that family for whose future advantage, alas! the greatest of Scotsmen had so laboured and hoped. A halo of pathetic tenderness is about the young creature, as much a daughter of Scotland as if she had been born a princess of a native dynasty against whom no rebel ever rose. We confess to a certain grudge against the husband who brought another wife and reared another family in Abbotsford, after this rightful lady of the place had faded in her youth; but that, no doubt, is quite unreasonable. Mr Lockhart, who has not had justice dealt him by the world, and whose keen temper and bitter sallies have been more remembered against him than his genius and high qualities have told in his favour, approved his daughter's choice, and his letter to his son-in-law on the occasion of his change of faith is one of the very highest testimonies which could be produced in Mr Hope's favour. “I trust,” Lockhart writes, “that this, the only part of your conduct that has given me pain, need not now nor ever disturb the confidence in which it has of late been a principal consolation to me to live with my son-in-law.” Lockhart died in the house which had now become his

daughter's—the dear and mournful house connected with so many glories and so many losses, from which, after a few years, she too went forth never to return, leaving again an only daughter to inherit, with so many additions, and in so strangely changed an atmosphere, Sir Walter's great name. Nothing can be more sad than this part of the narrative. And we cannot but repeat that a certain sense of something which we must not call desecration, an uneasy wish that it had been any other house in which the remainder of Mr Hope Scott's admirable and pious life was spent, returns to our mind as we carry on his history. Not that any reason, in what one of his critics—a man who ought to have known better, Sir Francis Hastings Doyle—calls “the gallant Presbyterianism” (whatever that may be) of Sir Walter, makes the intrusion of exotic priests, and the half-conventual rule of life described by Mr Ormsby, out of character with the place. Sir Walter was no Presbyterian, and his sympathies were all with the traditions of the past. But his great, natural, and reasonable mind—the healthy, sunshiny atmosphere that surrounded him, in which all was spontaneous, friendly, charitable—the catholicity of the heart,—was certainly much out of keeping with the routine of pietism, the elaborate devotions, and life directed and superintended by reverend fathers, which seems to have been introduced at Abbotsford.¹ This, however, is not a matter to be here discussed.

Thus ended, so far as the world was concerned, in confusion and downfall of all the hopes set on his head, and all the purposes with which he entered life, one of those sons of the prophets who seemed at one time most likely to have impressed his mark upon the world. He worked until he dropped, at the mere task-work, not noble, or necessary, or worthy of him, to which he had given his strength, and died leaving many tender friends, and much admiration and sorrow behind him; but also a general mournful sense of unfulfilment, the feeling of sore dissatisfaction with life and its problems, which so often follows a wasted existence, but seldom one so fully used, so outwardly prosperous, so good and spotless. This rich, busy, prosperous, righteous man, charitable in deed if not in sentiment, who had accomplished so many things in his life, and built so many houses, churches, and schools, and done so much good, and won so much love, and yet was a failure—what can any one say to such a paradox? It sums up all the lesser paradoxes which had abounded in his life.

In the case of his contemporary, Mr Maurice, there is no such discrepancy to record; but, in consequence, nothing of the tragical interest which, subdued by conventional forms and the outward composure of common life, is often even more profoundly touching than when expressed in tones of passion. Maurice's life was consistent throughout. As much as

¹ The Queen in her recent book makes a very charming allusion to her visit to Abbotsford, which is worth noting: “In the study,” her Majesty says, “we saw his [Sir Walter's] journal, in which Mr Hope Scott asked me to write my name, which *I felt it to be a presumption to do*”—words for which all who love Sir Walter will the more esteem the sovereign Lady, who thus acknowledges the sway of genius greater than her own.

any man ever did, he has shaped his existence "upon the plan that pleased his childish thought." There is no breach of continuity, no pause of discouragement to record in his much-labouring, much-writing existence. If we were to hesitate a fault in the career so pervaded by high motive and the most conscientious purpose, it would be the boundless flood of expression which makes us wonder whether anything in him was left unsaid, whether there were any intervals left for occupations less serious, whether he ever played or rested, or even ate and slept. It would be rash, perhaps, to say that he was a man who fulfilled all his intentions in life, for his career was one of continual opposition and controversy, and he was again and again displaced from posts in which he found congenial occupation, and compelled to retire, if never into silence, yet into comparative obscurity; but these failures were never from within. They were the consequence of a courage which never faltered, of a conscience which never prevaricated, of a devotion in which there never was any change of direction. His biographer, we think, has entered too much at length into past controversies, which, no doubt, were of the greatest importance in Mr Maurice's personal experience, but which have lost much of their interest for a generation which knew him only as a religious teacher and centre of influence, whose place in the history of an important period in our recent annals is permanent, and who moved many of the best minds of his generation. We could have been satisfied with very much less information about the unfortunate controversy at King's College, which ended in Maurice's separa-

tion from that institution, and in which, by means of his conviction that eternal life had begun already and did not exclusively mean the life beyond the grave, it was supposed to be proved that he did not believe in eternal perdition, and therefore was not qualified to teach theology in a college of the Church of England. The meaning which he did attach to these words he has set forth over and over again in his works; and it is one, like much that he has said, which is apt enough to confuse the matter-of-fact reader. The accusation, more just on the surface, that he was obscure in much of his teaching, is perhaps equally unfounded. He was not obscure to those who were capable of entering into the minute and subtle processes by which he worked out his own convictions and persuaded himself of every detail of the truths he treated. All that was wanted was the congenial mind, the ear that could hear. To such he was a teacher such as arises rarely in this world, able to throw light upon many dark places, and in his supreme conviction of the union of all men in Christ, finding a solution of many of the difficulties which seem to interfere between the different classes and developments of humanity. Whether this was more permanent than the glorifying and expanding influence of a fervent genius when directed specially upon one point of doctrine generally is, we will not pretend to say. Other men have directed the lantern of intense faith and intellectual power upon other articles of the Christian creed, with the same result of producing in the minds of a congenial audience a warm and delighted conviction that at last the universal solvent had been discovered. But the lantern fails,

and we return to the dominion of those stars far off and ever luminous which are all the light from heaven that we possess—enough to keep us in hopeful anticipation of a fuller final knowledge, but not to blaze into all the inscrutable ways of God's dealing with men. Mr Maurice, indeed, never pretended to do this; but there was a time when his disciples took the impulse he bestowed almost as a new revelation, and believed that they held in it the key to the heart of the discontented—the means of knitting together the separated classes, and making the lion and the lamb, the Chartist and the aristocrat, lie down together,—a consummation unfortunately not yet attained.

The episode of "Christian Socialism" is the only one which space permits us to enter into. It followed one of those periodical revelations of the wretchedness of the very poor in London, which, when they recur, move the heart of England to an often spasmodic and temporary effort, in which horror and compunction, and the generous sense that our own many enjoyments are almost a shame to us in the presence of so much wretchedness, stimulate benevolence. We have, all of us, just passed through a similar crisis with feelings equally keen, but, in all probability, equally evanescent. In 1850, the subject upon which all minds was aroused was what was called the "sweating system,"—the employment of workmen, tailors in this special instance, in their own wretched houses, without any safeguard of workshops or regular hours, at wages so miserable that it was impossible for them to keep body and soul together. A series of letters in the '*Morning Chronicle*,' such as have re-

cently appeared in another journal, aroused the feeling of the country to the famous English sentiment that "something must be done." It is characteristic of this period of popular history that it is now considered necessary that Government should interfere and law interpose to remedy the evil—a necessity which statesmen on both sides have acknowledged. It was characteristic of the mind of England thirty years ago, when fewer private benevolent agencies existed, that there should be a sudden rush of chivalrous individuals to the rescue. Kingsley came up from his country vicarage to see what was to be done; and a number of Mr Maurice's young barristers, who had learned to listen to sermons under his ministrations at Lincoln's Inn, and even to much personal instruction in a sort of mixture of a Bible-class and debating society, from their chaplain, rose to the same impulse. He was the acknowledged head and centre of this generous and ardent band, who were all inspired by his ideas of brotherhood, and eager to meet, help, and adopt into an ideal relationship the unknown working man. These gentlemen were struck on first meeting—as all must be who, out of the conventional monotony of the educated classes, are first brought in contact with intelligent minds not levelled by varnish of other men's thoughts, but boldly thinking their own—with admiration of the acuteness, the clearness, the decision of view and the justice of observation, which they found in their new friends. And what more natural than to hope that the generous warmth of Christian fraternity, when made fully visible to them, would charm these just and original minds? The name of Socialist was less understood in those

days than now. It was regarded with vague horror by the upper classes, with vague admiration and hope by the lower. The new band of eager philanthropists saw no reason why a name so fully expressive of the brotherly impulse which moved them, should be left either to French revolutionaries or theorists like Owen. It was determined among them that this title should be adopted and sanctified. Mr Maurice, if he did not originate, was easily persuaded of the fitness of the name, and agreed that it was "the only title which will define our object."

"'It is a great thing,' he says, with that curious habit of persuading himself minutely of the justice of every point he adopts, which is so characteristic of him, 'not to leave people to poke out our object and proclaim it with infinite triumph.' 'Why, you are Socialists in disguise!' 'In disguise?—not a bit of it! There it is staring you in the face on our title-page.' 'You want to thrust in ever so much priesthood under a good revolutionary name.' 'Well, did we not warn you of it? Did we not profess that our intended something was quite different from what your Owenish lectures meant?' This is the fair-play which English people like."

Thus the tracts on Christian Socialism were ushered into the world. They did not produce the same effect as those other famous Tracts which had rent the Church of England asunder—perhaps, indeed, no more effect than any other burst of philanthropic enthusiasm; but the work they inaugurated, by the creation of co-operative workshops, was practical, and has risen to a large importance, besides furnishing an example and precedent for other movements, such as that great modern one of co-operative stores, which is neither Christian nor philanthropic, nor of any moral importance whatever, but,

in our humble opinion, a nuisance to everybody concerned, except the shareholders. The co-operative workshops founded by Mr Maurice and his followers, and which were the first result of the movement, have prospered exceedingly, according to the statement and statistics furnished by his biographers. Perhaps it was too much to expect that they should have led to a general return of the working classes towards the Christian faith, and in this respect the great views of the "Promoters" were scarcely justified. But the practical result was good; and the formation of the Working Man's College which followed after some time, and which was very dear to Mr Maurice's heart, was one of the eventual results of the movement.

It produced also Mr Kingsley's remarkable novel of 'Alton Locke,' and thus directed a general attention and fictitious interest to the working classes, not very flattering indeed to the largest section of the race, who have no more desire than any other to pose as curiosities of natural history. It is needless to say that this was far from the author's intention, as it was far from the mind of his leader and friend. The workmen, if still impressing them more than was perhaps reasonable by the novelty of finding thought and independent judgment in forms so different from those employed by educated men, were by both eagerly welcomed, chiefly on the ground which Mr Maurice was at all times so anxious to put forth, and in the bond which, to his exalted vision, seemed universal and capable of no restriction—that of brothers in Christ, whether they understood it or not. This was the principle of unity which he acknowledged alone—not "the basis of a common Christianity"—

not the brotherhood of flesh and blood,—the community of Nature. The distinctions and differences herein involved require a very steady head to hold, and close attention to follow : but however mystical and overdrawn they may be supposed to be, this belief was the mainspring of Maurice's life.

Even his devoted followers gave him infinite trouble by times in following it. They went too far in practical matters, flinging themselves into the organisations of their *protégés*, and doing their best to draw with them the man who would not by any force be moved from his own standing-ground, would head no new sect, and attempt to establish no new order. Sometimes it happened that one of these enthusiastic followers would upbraid him with putting his hand to the plough and drawing back. Sometimes the bolder spirits, putting their heads together, would rush into a rash statement with which he had no sympathy. On one occasion he caused an entire edition of a tract, which the younger men had been shouting songs of triumph over, to be cancelled at once, reducing them to rueful silence. Thus the mild man maintained his independence and power, although he continually repudiated any leadership. It was not, however, possible that these proceedings, and the literature to which they gave rise, should escape criticism and comment. They were assailed with the most unfounded accusations. One writer went out of his way to associate *two clergymen of the Church of England* with the infamous publications of French socialists, in which "murder is openly advocated, all property is declared to be robbery, the rules by which marriage is declared sa-

cred and inviolate are treated as the dreams of dotage, obedience of every description is denounced as moral cowardice," in so dignified an organ as the 'Quarterly Review.' We might be disposed to think in the calm of distance that an accusation like this need not much have disturbed the peace of such men as Maurice and Kingsley. But they called forth upon the former an inquiry in King's College, and opened the process by which he was eventually severed from that institution ; and they helped to raise a popular cry against him, in which many who now respectfully acknowledge Mr Maurice as one of the leading spirits of his age, as well as one of the purest, were led, without sufficient thought, to join. His career was agitated beyond description by these attacks, which drove him from King's College, which shut the paths of professional advancement to him, and strewed his way with thorns for many years. In all this time, however, it must be said that he never once showed any signs of discouragement, but was always ready with a new pamphlet, or letter as long—always disposed at a moment's notice to explain at any length, to friend or foe, the faith which was in him, and never failed in health or patience. If he had been remarkable in no other way, this of itself is enough to have made him so.

The first sign of a turn in the tide of popular feeling was given when, in the year 1860, he was appointed to the charge of St Peter's, Vere Street. By the stimulus of his continual enemy, the 'Record' newspaper, an attempt was made to get up an address by the clergy to the Bishop of London, praying him not to institute Maurice. This called forth

an overwhelming protest in the shape of a counter-address to himself, congratulating him on his appointment, and signed by no less than 332 clergymen and 487 laymen—both sections containing the most distinguished names of the time. Maurice's reply to this document is highly characteristic. He disclaims the name of a learned theologian which his friends had given him; he disclaims "any special zeal on behalf of the working classes" which they had attributed to him,—and once more, for the hundredth time, sets forth the foundation of all his work, the hope of all his life, the catholicity and unity to which his heart had been devoted ever since he had been able to judge for himself. We may conclude as we began with this declaration of his faith.

"The Church of England confesses a Father who has revealed Himself in a Son; a Son who took our nature and became man, and has redeemed men to be His children; a Spirit who raises men to be spirits. She invites

all to stand on that ground. She tells all—so I read her formularies—that they have no less right to claim their places in her as members of Christ than they have to claim their places in the nation as subjects of the Queen, and in their families as children of an earthly father and mother. This was a rock upon which I felt that I could rest. It was a foundation for a universal human society. If no such society existed, history seemed to me a hopeless riddle, life very intolerable. If it did exist, it would not crush national life or family life, but must cherish and sustain both. It could stifle no thought; it must thrive when it suffered persecution, grow weak whenever it inflicted persecution. It must be ready to embrace all persons; it could never seek to comprehend any sect. It can be the great instrument of healing the strife of classes within a nation. It must proclaim Christ as the Deliverer and Head of all nations."

These two men are both dead, and their works do follow them. Which was the more catholic? it is a question which the reader will doubtless solve from his own point of view.

MR GLADSTONE'S BAD PAPER.

WHEN a firm of doubtful stability is sending its bills through the market in a vain effort to get them discounted, such documents are described in financial circles as "bad paper." This epithet perhaps suits the Representation of the People Bill which Mr Gladstone has produced better than any other by which it can be characterised. The position of the Government is parallel to that of a mercantile house which, having once possessed good credit, finds itself, by unlucky operations at home and foolish speculations abroad, on the brink of an insolvency that can only be averted or postponed by means of an Accommodation Bill. Security in such an instrument is everything to the discounter; and if it is wholly wanting in that essential, he will very wisely have nothing to do with it. Mr Gladstone has now invited us to help himself and his partners through his troubles by backing this gigantic Accommodation Bill of his; and surely we shall be wise before allowing play to our natural feelings of sympathy with distress, to anxiously ask ourselves whether it is "good" or "bad paper."

Now this Bill of Mr Gladstone's not only does not offer even the pretence of security, but it is tendered to us under circumstances which can scarcely fail to rouse the suspicions of every rational and unprejudiced critic. It is grievously inopportune as to time. It has been thrust upon us at the very moment when the whole energies of the British Government, aided by the undistracted interest of the British people, ought to be devoted to the redemption of our responsibilities in Egypt, which have for

months past been scandalising us in the face of all Europe. We have had for a year and a half a nation on our hands drifting deeper and deeper into hopeless insolvency; relapsing into an anarchy for which the worst days of native rule afford no parallel; devastated by a war attended by wholesale massacre and brutal savageries; ground down by taxation which the hapless peasantry see with horror must be increased upon their posterity to pay for the results of our blunders. And all the while we have not been able to give them an institution that will freely strike root among them, or to confer upon them one single blessing from the resources of our boasted civilisation. It is while this drama of death and distress is being enacted under his eyes and patronage that the Prime Minister seizes the occasion to please himself and amuse his followers by letting off a display of legislative fireworks. The spectacle was not one calculated to raise the national reputation in the eyes of Foreign Powers; nor could it have been agreeable to those among us who think that there ought to be a national conscience regulated by sentiments of honour and humanity not dissimilar to those which should direct the individual. Egypt in a blaze, and our troops in the midst of the flames, while the Prime Minister is lashing himself into a fever of eloquence over the service and lodger franchises. *Proh pudor!*

Though our present object is not to deal with Egyptian difficulties, a few words on the situation there are unavoidable, as our relationship and responsibilities in regard to that country form the chief considera-

tions which ought to determine whether or not this session is a fitting season for dealing with so important a measure as a Reform Bill. It is the first occasion in our recent history that a British Ministry has selected the time of a crisis abroad for introducing a great constitutional question. Though we may grant the Ministry's claims to omnipotent capacity, we cannot admit that it is able to deal with the interests which we have involved in Egypt, and with a measure creating at least a couple of millions of new electors, at one and the same time. It has already shown that it is not capable of such a feat. It was while Ministers were engrossed in the production of this sweeping measure of Reform, that their neglect of the condition of the Khedive's government, and of the stake we had connected with it, landed us in our present troubles. And now that an avowal of responsibility has been forced upon Ministers, and that Lord Hartington in their name has enunciated the course of policy which they intend to hold—only the outlines of a policy, no doubt, but still sufficiently definite to enable the country to gauge by events the success or failure by which it is pursued—the impossibility of considering a great measure of domestic legislation, and at the same time guiding the affairs of Egypt towards a peaceful and prosperous settlement, becomes more and more manifest. Concentrated as attention has been on the rebellion in the Soudan, we have been apt to forget that all this time the affairs of Lower Egypt are going to rack and ruin. Except when now and then an intimation is received that another Minister has been dismissed for his inability to appreciate the salvation which the British Govern-

ment is working out for his country, or that one more of our paper institutions has utterly broken down, we hear very little of the country below the Cataracts. Yet busy as the Government professes to have been in providing Lower Egypt with representative institutions, impartial tribunals, an active police, enlightened financiers, and what not, eighteen months of reorganisation appear to have plunged it into worse anarchy than that in which we found it. Loan after loan is being swallowed up without any appreciable result except an increase of Egypt's obligations. A month or two ago the Messrs Rothschild advanced a million sterling on the "recommendation" of the Government. Another loan of some six millions is now urgently needed, for which a more definite security will probably have to be provided, especially as Lord Hartington "does not say that it may not be necessary to propose some modification of the law of liquidation." The financial position of Egypt is a subject that we will have to grapple with, and that in an earnest manner, long before the happy period of our retirement arrives, and our intimate connection with its government seems not unlikely to implicate us still more seriously in its indebtedness. The internal condition of the country has also reached a crisis which the British Government cannot longer tolerate consistently with its own credit. It is no Utopia which the Cairo correspondent of the 'Standard,' telegraphing on March 12, describes:—

"The state of the country is indeed causing the gravest apprehensions in every respect. Not only are brigandage and crimes of violence largely on the increase, but the greatest difficulty is experienced in collecting the taxes. The bean crop is likely to prove an

entire failure, and this will increase the distress and consequent discontent of the peasantry. The dissensions which prevail in high quarters, and the absence of any fixed or settled government, are giving rise to increased and general discontent throughout the whole administrative system. The officials sullenly refuse to work under the new system; and the population, being left to their own devices, are rapidly acquiring a lawless and reckless spirit, which has hitherto been unknown in Egypt. In writing thus of the steady downward movement towards chaos which has been slowly going on for the last two years, but is now proceeding at a terribly accelerated pace, I am not simply giving the result of my own observation, but am echoing the universal cry which comes from people with means of information in all parts of Egypt."

The whips of Mehemet Ali and the grinding exactions of Ismail must be recollections of a golden age compared with the experiences of the *fellahin* under the Egypto-British autonomy. We have always been ready at a minute's notice to put the misgoverned provinces of the Porte to rights; but here we have a state of matters under British auspices that we may vainly challenge the Sultan to parallel within his dominions. But peradventure we shall have leisure to look into the subject with the assistance of the labourer and the lodger as soon as we have got this weighty Franchise Bill disposed of.

The fact is that we have reached a stage at which, whether we are willing or not, the condition of Egypt, both Upper and Lower, will not longer bear to be trifled with. The truth has forced itself into light, that our work in Egypt during the past twelve months has been a fraud upon the British public and the European Powers. If the Ministry were aware of the sham character of the reorganisa-

tion which it was causing to be carried out, it must bear the full *onus* of the imposition; if it really thought that the country was making that solid and satisfactory progress which we were so often assured it was achieving, then the Government was either culpably ignorant or criminally indifferent. On either supposition sufficient explanation of its reticence exists. But now that they have been found out, how are Ministers to answer to Europe—to those Powers who in Conference at Constantinople "commissioned" Mr Gladstone, as he avers, to take the settlement of Egypt in hand? They will opine, we fear, that we have been offering them Brummagem plated goods for British Hall-marked silver. That the Government is not unconscious of how strongly this impeachment must attach to it, may be inferred from the recent civilities offered by Lord Granville to the Porte regarding the Soudan. When the Ministry at first declared in favour of abandoning the Soudan, the remonstrances of Turkey were rudely thrust aside: the British Ministry would neither allow the Porte to send troops to quell the insurrection, nor would it make use of its own forces. The Sultan's Government, however, prepared to take the opinion of the Powers on the subject; and under this threat her Majesty's Government at once warmed into cordiality towards Constantinople, recognised the Sultan's sovereignty, and promised to make such arrangements regarding the Soudan and the Red Sea coast as would secure the assent of the Porte. The fact that sooner or later we shall have to account to Europe for our Egyptian mismanagement is a very formidable skeleton in the Cabinet's closet; and we may be certain that Turkey is only waiting for

her opportunity—which will probably be when the next “unforeseen and inevitable disaster” occurs—to bring us before the bar of the Powers.

When we look towards the Soudan itself, the situation seems more hopelessly complicated than ever. We have won two victories, lost over 100 men, have had about 250 wounded, and have killed, more or less, 6000 Arabs, and yet we are not much nearer the solution of the problem than we were before. It always appeals to the national feeling when we hear that the old martial spirit of the country has been again vindicated in the persons of her present sons,—and never more than in recent years, when success has not always been our lot. We feel proud, also, that even the maligned recruit of modern days can hold his own against the wild dash of the Arabs not less stanchly than the trained and sturdy veterans of a former day bore the Russian charge at Inkerman. But all feelings of triumph at the victories of Teb and Tamanieb sink before the sickening details of the slaughter wrought by our soldiers upon their brave enemies. Britons outside the Cabinet, though humane enough, are not naturally wont to be squeamish about blood-guiltiness; but there is something about this fighting in the Eastern Soudan that troubles the not very susceptible national conscience. When we read of the thousands of gallant Arabs ploughed down by our bullets as they dashed on, only to meet death upon the bayonets of our soldiers, we cannot think without a pang of remorse that all this slaughter might have been averted if Mr Gladstone and his colleagues had been vigilant enough in time. Newspaper correspondents testify to the fact that even the troops looked with loathing upon the

butchering work in which they had to engage,—a sentiment not very common to the British soldier, who, when his blood is up and the foe in the field before him, generally recks little of the abstract merits of the quarrel in which he is fighting. These feelings of horror are more than reciprocated by the public at home, who can find no consolation in the victories of our troops for the violence done to our national credit for humanity,—who plainly perceive that, had the Ministry done its duty in time, there would have been no massacres at Kashgate and Sinkat, no slaughters at Teb or Tamanieb. If any one assurance could be drawn from the protestations of the Premier and his colleagues, it must have been that no charge of blood-guiltiness would lie at Britain's door during their administration; and yet the blood of these 6000 slaughtered Arabs is crying aloud to heaven, from the sands of the Soudan, in a bitter protest against their insincerity.

And what have we got by these blood-stained victories? Absolutely nothing, so far as any one can see. We have driven the enemy from the vicinity of Suakim; but what assurances have we that the survivors will not succeed in transferring the centre of insurrection to some other locality, where it will be more difficult for us to attack them? Fanaticism such as that which we have to encounter, is not to be crushed by two, or even three defeats. The nature of the country and the coming hot weather are auxiliaries of which the remnants of the rebels will soon have the full benefit. The only chance that we have of utilising our victories, is by following them up with the utmost promptness until the last embers of the revolt are trodden under foot. It is curious to see

the straws at which the Government is clutching as an excuse for future inaction. A respectable and influential sheikh, who very judiciously waited the result of General Graham's operations before declaring himself our ally, "believes that when the news of Osman Digma's defeat is spread amongst native tribes, they will become peaceful, and the Berber road become clear in about ten days." Well, say the authorities, let us wait for ten days at least, and see if he is right. But what is of even more importance, we are told, the religious chief—Es-Senoussi of Tunis—has issued a decree declaring the Prophet of the Soudan an impostor,—an announcement which seems more likely to gratify her Majesty's Government than to convince the Arabs. Es-Senoussi himself aspires to be a Mahdi, and bears all the physical marks foretold of the Mahdi in his own person. Imagine with what a feeling of relief the Ministry would learn that the Archbishop of Canterbury had addressed a pastoral to Irish Roman Catholics, informing them that his Holiness the Pope was an impostor, and that they were to abandon all connection with the Fenian movement! We might then repeal the Coercion Acts with safety, might we not? Yet the two cases are exactly parallel; and the weight which supporters of the do-nothing policy seek to attach to such trifles is a melancholy proof of how loath Ministerial circles are to realise the serious nature of the task which is before us.

It seems to be more than probable that Osman Digma will endeavour to make his way to the Upper Soudan, where he may have a chance of recruiting his strength, and where the situation appears to be favourable to his making another

stand. It apparently did not enter into the intentions of the Government to follow up the rebels; and hence such partial and tardy advances as General Graham has been able to make were probably dictated by a reluctant acknowledgment of the Government that the rebellion was not yet put under. Taught by experience, the Arabs are not likely to provoke another battle with British troops, but may harass them by drawing them into the interior, falling back step by step until our soldiers are led into the heart of the revolt, where numbers may place the rebels on a more equal footing with our arms of precision. It might have been expected that the defeats of Teb and Tamanieb would make the rebels recoil on the Upper Soudan. The capabilities of General Gordon and the Egyptians there for dealing with such an irruption are involved in mystery. What between interruptions to the telegraph and the silence of the Government, we have for some time been able to form only a very faint conception of what is transpiring at Khartoum. We know, however, that the country round Khartoum, and down as far as Berber, is in open revolt; that Khartoum is threatened, if not actually beleaguered; that Gordon's retreat is effectually barred; and that the lives of himself and his garrison are in imminent peril. He has succeeded with some difficulty in relieving one garrison, but only to draw the rebels closer about Khartoum. Nothing, it would appear, stands between Gordon and the other Europeans and destruction except a garrison of native troops, on which only a limited dependence can be placed. Of Gordon's political movements we know but little, and that little by no means warrants the

supposition that he has succeeded in solving the difficulties of his situation. How could he, between the anxieties which he has to face and the uncertain and contradictory instructions with which he has been cumbered? He has tried almost every expedient open to him: for one reason or other none of them has recommended itself to public opinion. He went to Khartoum to superintend the abandonment of the Soudan, presumably on the understanding that the Mahdi and the Sultans were to be left to fight out the sovereignty of the country between them. This would not do. Then the country was to be left to the Sultans. But the Mahdi was the stronger power. Then the Mahdi was to be the Khedive's legatee. But public opinion successfully protested against the establishment of a fanatic power in the Soudan; and that project too was abandoned. The last of Gordon's recommendations, that Zobeir Pasha should be set up in the Soudan, had as little to recommend it as any of his previous suggestions. Zobeir, though a man of some energy and vigour, has been too much identified in times past with the worst aspects of the Soudan slave-trade for the credit of the British Government to be implicated in his appointment. Then General Gordon is said to have already recognised the Mahdi as Sultan of Kordofan, —an arrangement which appears to every one but himself to be fraught with the utmost peril to the future peace of the Soudan. It seems clear, therefore, that we cannot depend upon General Gordon for that definite counsel by which our policy must be ultimately determined. We lay no blame to his charge: the Ministry which prescribed his task took care at the

same time, by its instructions, to render its performance impossible. He seems now to be anxious to get away from the Soudan; and it does not appear that the Government will be disposed to throw obstacles in the way of his retirement as soon as he can get out of Khartoum. We miss now the constant reassurances of confidence which Ministers expressed in Gordon's success at first; and Lord Hartington has even gone the length of throwing out doubts about the stability of his resolutions.

There is one course which has not yet been tried, and which, though not simple—for the circumstances of the Soudan are not to be treated by a simple remedy—is at least practicable, and might in all probability prove successful. If a Conservative Ministry were in power, it would most likely place an English officer of military ability and administrative experience, such as is readily to be found in the Indian service, in charge of the Soudan; support him at Khartoum by a small force of Indian cavalry and infantry until he has consolidated that portion of the Soudan which it is desirable that Egypt should still retain; let him demarcate frontiers, establish treaties with the tribes beyond, and raise local levies, which would secure the future peace of the country, and enable the Indian force to be dispensed with in time. Under such an arrangement there would be good grounds for hoping that the Soudan would soon cease to trouble either the Khedive or our own Cabinet. To a man like John Lawrence or James Outram, with means of enforcing his authority, the settlement of the Soudan would be a comparatively simple matter; and the time has now come when the alternative of employing Indian troops, or of sacri-

ficing British soldiers to the severity of the climate, will have to be at once faced. Had General Graham had an Indian contingent under him at Tamanieb, with a few regiments of native cavalry, he would have been able to reap the fruits of his victory by following up the broken parties of rebels, and finally extinguishing the revolt so far as the Eastern Soudan is concerned.

The severity of the Conservative strictures on the vacillating and reticent policy of the Government during the discussion on the Egyptian vote of credit compelled the Ministry to yield to the force of public opinion, and make a statement regarding its intentions. This explanation was made under circumstances that were singular, if not suspicious. The Premier was indisposed, and we can scarcely say whether he was to be congratulated or condoled with on his inability to be in his place. It fell to Lord Hartington to make known the purposes of the Government. His lordship reiterated with more distinctness than has characterised any previous Government utterance, the assurance that the British must remain in Egypt until a stable Government had been established there, and that while there we must accept full responsibility for the main points of Egyptian policy. It was of great importance, he declared, that the Red Sea ports should be held "by a civilised Power," or "by a Power under the influence of a civilised Power;" and "it was a matter of importance to British interests that the ports on the Red Sea should not be in any condition which would tempt any European Power to occupy them." "It appears to me," said the Marquis, "considering the importance of the Red Sea, as being on the line of communication with our Indian possessions, that it

is of great importance that no European Power should have a port on that sea." It is significant that France, which has also Eastern possessions, is preparing to occupy her purchase of Obok on the Red Sea, to the south of Abyssinia. We cannot prevent this, although the movement may subsequently cause us trouble; but we have the power, and if Lord Hartington is right, the Government has the will, to keep the Red Sea, from Suez down to Massowah, under the control either of ourselves or of a civilised ally or dependant; and if we pay due attention to Aden and Perim, we shall have ensured the freedom of our route to India, so far as that portion of it is concerned. While there is much that is satisfactory in Lord Hartington's statement,—so satisfactory, that Sir Stafford Northcote was justified in regarding it as indicative of a "new departure,"—yet there are many suggestions conveyed in the Secretary for War's oracular utterances that are calculated to cause more disquiet than is perhaps necessary. What are we to infer from the expressions "a civilised Power," and "a Power under the influence of a civilised Power," or are we to infer that anything in particular is meant? We are inclined to doubt the latter supposition. We do not believe that the Government has been able to frame any ultimate policy with regard to the future of Egypt, should the day ever arrive when Britain can leave it to rely upon its own resources. Accepting Lord Hartington's statement that we have to remain in Egypt, exercising full responsibility for all the main points of Egyptian policy, until a stable Government has been established, it is evident that we have many years' work before us in the Khedive's country. In fact, Lord Hart-

ington has announced a British protectorate of Egypt for a period terminable by an event which must lie many years before us in the future. The best statecraft in the world could not frame a stable Government out of the elements of insolvency, anarchy, impotence, and discontent that compose the Egyptian situation, within the term of existence of the longest-lived British Ministry; and with changes of Government, change of views with regard to Egypt is to be expected. It is little likely that it will fall to members of the present Ministry to settle the basis upon which Egypt is to be left to itself. It is enough that it has assumed the protectorate of the country until that time comes, and accepted the full responsibility implied in this relationship—for that, we take it, is what Lord Hartington's statement to the House amounts to.

The weak point in the Government's position is the uncertainty which the public cannot help feeling about the authority which belongs to Lord Hartington's assurances. It goes much farther in the way of pledging the Government than anything that had previously dropped from any of his colleagues; it is a complete abandonment of the irresponsible position taken up by Mr Gladstone and Earl Granville in the debate on the vote of censure; and it is in direct variance with those of his colleagues who have loudly proclaimed a "stew-in-their-own-juice" or a "rescue-and-retire" policy. In fact, unless Lord Hartington has succeeded in converting a majority of the Cabinet to a policy of common-sense and sound statesmanship, he must have been speaking a good deal for himself; and the country wants to know whether the Ministry consider themselves bound by his promises?

The question is not an impertinent one. Time after time in recent years Lord Hartington has committed himself to some expression of opinion or course of action, which he abandoned for the very different views of his colleagues when the moment for testing his consistency arrived. We trust his explanation of the Egyptian policy of the Government carries with it more weight; but considering the circumstances, the Opposition will not be to blame if, in both Houses, it seeks from Ministers who are more intimately connected with foreign policy a definite confirmation of Lord Hartington's assurances. For it is one of the most marked characteristics of the present Cabinet, that each Minister speaks for himself without the slightest regard for the views of his colleagues, or respect for the general policy which regulates their action as a Government.

But if we are really to undertake the establishment of a stable Government in Egypt, with a full sense of all the responsibilities which such a duty will entail, with a sincere desire to avoid the shams by which Ministers have hitherto been imposed upon or which they have imposed upon the public, the task is one that imperatively demands the undivided energies of the Government. Not one session, not two or three perhaps, will suffice to fully remedy our errors of the past twelve months, and to lay solid foundations upon which Egypt can rest without British power to prop it up. If, as we are in charity bound to hope, the Ministry be penetrated with a sense of the calamities which have sprung from their past vacillation and indifference, and of the blood-guiltiness which does not require to be brought home to them,

let them show their penitence by acknowledging the claims Egypt has upon their attention as the most important subject in which British statesmanship is at present interested—a subject in which our honour, our humanity, and our interests are implicated. Let them lay aside any party subjects of domestic legislation which are likely to divide Parliament and distract the country, and address themselves to Egyptian affairs until the reproach that now hangs over them has been finally removed. We venture to say that by such a straightforward and ingenuous stroke of policy Mr Gladstone would do more to rehabilitate the credit of himself and his colleagues with the country than by essaying any such piece of political kite-flying as the Reform Bill which he has introduced into the House of Commons. In the state of Egyptian affairs, the Bill itself has excited no interest; and even organised agitation has failed to whip up any notable enthusiasm on its behalf. Even if the Opposition were to limit their functions to criticism, and to treat the Bill as a fair basis for legislation, it is doubtful now whether the Government, in its divided state, would be able to pass it into law.

The attitude which every loyal Conservative must assume towards the Reform Bill is a very simple one. He is bound to do his best to secure its rejection, (1) because it could only be carried into law at the imminent risk of having to neglect the urgent responsibilities which we have assumed in Egypt; (2) because the condition of Ireland, while under the Coercion Acts, is unfitted for a change in the representation; (3) because it is unaccompanied by a scheme of Redistribution,

and the country does not believe that a Ministry so much at variance within itself as the Gladstone Government is at present, will last unchanged for another twelve months to pass a homogeneous scheme of Redistribution; (4) because it has been intimated that Ireland is to be benefited in the scheme of Redistribution at the expense of the other countries—a too obvious bribe for Nationalist support; and (5) because there is no urgent desire for reform in the country, compared with the public anxiety to see us extricated from our Egyptian difficulties, Ireland quietly settled down, and the Franchise and Redistribution treated as a comprehensive whole. On any one of these grounds it will be incumbent upon the Conservative party to employ every tactic at its command to postpone the subject of Parliamentary Reform until the nation is satisfied that it can be safely discussed, and until we have a Government sufficiently free from external troubles and internal discord, to bring forward a complete measure of Reform.

Unless the Ministerial bubble should burst in the interval, we presume the Premier and his mechanical majority will force the House of Commons to discuss his project through all its stages—although he is well aware that such a course will be a flagrant waste of public time, and that there are other subjects which are calling much more imperatively for the undivided attention of himself and his colleagues. The Bill itself is a most cumbersome piece of legislation for attaining a very simple object—the complete destruction of the present representation of landed property, and the conversion of the counties into areas practicable for the operations of the Caucus. The measure at the outset proceeds up-

on a very false assumption. Mr Gladstone began by begging the chief question at issue, and arguing that because the franchise which he proposed to adopt had been approved by fifteen years' experience in the boroughs, therefore it was applicable to the county populations. This is exactly the point which he will have to prove. It assumes that the position of the county householder is homogeneous with that of the borough householder. Now the difference is in reality so great, that it strikes at once at the root of the Premier's position. The basis of the vote is in the one case the house, and in the other the land; and upon these two bases very different conditions of society have grown up. It may well be that there are classes interested in land who are at present unfairly excluded from the exercise of the franchise; and so far as admitting these into the electorate is concerned, there may be ground for a Reform Bill. But it is entirely another thing when we come to the transplanting of household suffrage—a system which has grown up in towns, and is only applicable with either justice or propriety to urban circumstances, to rural districts. It is like causewaying the Vale of Evesham, or setting to work with a steam-plough in New Street, Birmingham. No measure of reform can benefit the British nation that fails to recognise the distinctions between the urban and rural communities, not merely in education, in intelligence, and in habits, but also in what is more important to the subject, in condition. Between the artisan of the manufacturing towns and the agricultural labourer, there exists a gulf which no franchise can bridge over—especially a franchise that has household suffrage for its basis. While in ninety-nine cases

out of a hundred the borough artisan occupies a house which is not owned by his employer, in as many cases on the other hand the agricultural labourer is housed by his master. Household suffrage could thus be safely introduced into boroughs without that imminent risk of creating a war of classes, with interests intimately bound up together, which threatens us when we come to apply it to the counties. Providing landholds are adequately represented—and we do not say they are—the agricultural labourer has no just cause to complain; and, as yet, he has uttered no complaint. On the contrary, he is much more likely to view with apprehension a measure of household suffrage which would swamp all the interests he is concerned in by the votes of miners and factory-hands—classes with whom he has no sympathy, and whom he views with considerable distrust. Had Mr Gladstone contented himself with extending the £10 clear annual value franchise to counties, and recognising the fact that such fancy franchises as the “lodger,” “service,” or “household” were unsuited to their circumstances, something might have been said on behalf of his Bill as a measure calculated to redress an inequality in the town and country populations. As the Bill stands, we can scarcely believe that he could ever seriously have anticipated that the rural classes would abandon the idea that land is the proper basis of representation; and he must surely have framed so democratic a measure rather for flaunting it in the eyes of the country than in any serious hope that an independent branch of the Legislature would accept it.

Besides the fundamental error of basing the county franchise upon the house instead of upon the land, the two new franchises which

are introduced by this Bill are such as ought to have no place in a scheme of county representation. While in some instances, such as that of the agricultural labourer, or of the miner, who lives in houses belonging to his employer, there will be a great tendency to foment ill-feelings, and to accentuate with more bitterness than before every fresh dispute between capital and labour, in a great many cases the effect of the Bill will simply be a very patent absurdity. When domestic servants are enfranchised by the Act, as a great many must be, it is ridiculous to suppose that they will exercise an independent vote. Their situations, and in the long-run their habitations, depend upon their pleasing their masters; and, unless they are anxious for a change, they will have much more regard for their employer's views than for the programme which Conservative or Liberal solicits them to support. It will be said that they have the protection of the ballot, and are thus secured against all evil consequences of giving effect to their own opinion; but the ballot in the counties will only aggravate the evil. The dependant who becomes possessed of a vote will now feel that he is an object of suspicion; and that the franchise is a source of embarrassment and danger to him rather than a boon. Many of the rural classes see social difficulties in the position to which the Prime Minister is anxious to raise them, which would lead them to gladly decline the trust of the franchise, as they will doubtless see fit to refrain from exercising it, if it should be thrust upon them.

The lodger franchise is another novelty which, however suitable it may be for boroughs, is quite at variance with the conditions of rural society. While in boroughs the lodger is very often a person

of character and intelligence, the same can scarcely be said in general terms of those persons who in rural districts would most benefit by this franchise. They are as a rule the more improvident and backward classes, who have never even managed to get the length of a household stake in the country; in the mining villages and towns they constitute that part of the population known as the "roughs"; while in purely rural districts the lodger class would be found to comprise that section of society which has hitherto been represented chiefly at quarter-sessions and assizes. In this division of the franchise, as in the others, Mr Gladstone's scheme is vitiated by its fundamental error in assuming that a system of representation which was specially framed for the circumstances of cities and boroughs, and which has given fair satisfaction, can be applied to the entirely different state of circumstances existing in the counties.

It is, however, when we come to inquire what will be the immediate effect of the Bill upon the strength of the electorate, that we discern how preposterous is Mr Gladstone's proposal, even more than by an examination of the modes by which the enfranchisement is to be carried out. At the least computation it will create 2,000,000 new electors, —very probably 2,500,000. Even if such a proposal had been accompanied by a definite scheme of redistribution, the increase is enough to take away our breath: unaccompanied by such a scheme, it is simply impossible that the country should take such a leap in the dark. We cannot be expected to open the flood-gates of democracy at random, without providingsluices to regulate its flow, and channels into which its currents may be directed. There is no disguising

the fact that the new Reform Bill proposes a complete transfer of political power. The counterpoise which the counties have hitherto supplied to the democratic spirit of the boroughs is at once to be swept away. The representation which property has up to this time enjoyed in our political system, will be entirely crushed beneath the mass of new electors who have no such stake in the country. Mr Goschen warned Parliament very plainly of this.

"If you put the additions of 1867 and the proposed additions together, the new constituency emancipated by these two Bills will be larger than the whole constituency which existed before 1866—that is to say, that since 1866, by these two Bills we shall have taken the power from the classes that previously enjoyed it, and placed it in the hands of an absolute majority who were not in the enjoyment of it. What I maintain is, that the number of voters inhabiting houses below £10, admitted in 1867 and proposed to be admitted now, will be in the majority, and that to their hands will be committed the future destinies of this country. While admitting the capacity of a great number of those who are to be enfranchised to exercise the vote, I cannot forget that in giving power to this new class, you are taking the power almost entirely away from the other classes; and while I admit that the Government are entitled to say that minorities should not be always able to render nugatory the will of majorities, I hope that there are members on both sides of the House who still hold that arrangements must be made by which the rights of minorities shall be secured and guaranteed."

We can only express surprise that one who estimates so justly, and apparently has so great doubts of, Mr Gladstone's Reform Bill, should feel himself able to support it; and as Mr Goschen gave no adequate reasons for the line he intended to take, we may assume

that he calmly proposes to vote against his deliberate convictions for party reasons. His warning, however, will not be lost upon the country. When the Reform Bill comes under the consideration of the constituencies, the present electors will keep full in view the fact that Mr Gladstone is asking them to surrender the political power which they have hitherto exercised with so much advantage to the nation, in favour of a lower and less educated stratum of society—is asking them, in fact, to politically obliterate themselves for the sake of the masses. We do not believe that the common-sense of the present electors will ever consent to such a sacrifice. No doubt a majority would be willing to give a generous response to any plea on the ground of equality; but Mr Gladstone's Bill does not aim at equality: its object is to subordinate the views and interests of all other classes to the votes of those inhabiting houses below ten pounds, to lodgers, and the labouring and mining masses. When this fact is fairly realised by the present electors, a wise conservatism will probably temper their liberal feelings. No doubt they have hitherto believed that it was their duty to support a Reform Bill; but then previous Reform Bills invested them with electoral power: the result of the present one will be the entire effacement of their political influence.

The motion of which Lord John Manners has given notice correctly expresses the feelings of the Conservative party, and, we believe, of a very large body of Liberals as well, towards the Franchise Bill. It is no obstruction to Reform to throw out a measure that is confessedly incomplete, and which asks the country to commit itself to a scheme the most important part

of which is still kept *in secretis*. No Ministry has ever asked and obtained the same amount of trust as the Gladstone Government now urges Parliament to repose in it. The idea savours of the "confidence trick" which we read of in police reports, and which invariably ends in the swindler walking off with the stake which the confiding countryman has been simple enough to place in his hands. Even if the Gladstone Government could be trusted to bring out a scheme of redistribution that would reduce to order the chaos which its franchise project is certain to bring about, its circumstances are such that it can offer no valid assurances that it will be able to redeem its engagements. Look at the state of the Government towards the close of last month. The Premier *en retraite*, his lieutenant in the House of Commons reversing his policy; Cabinets meeting only to adjourn for another attempt to make up their squabbles; Sir Charles Dilke vapouring about an appeal to the country; Mr Chamberlain rushing to Birmingham for comfort from the Caucus; the Radicals in revolt in the Lower House; and the Government only saved from defeat by a narrow majority of seventeen. These facts are not indicative of a Ministry strong enough to claim confidence from the constituencies to be allowed another year to deal with redistribution. Suppose they were allowed to pass the Reform Bill, and another of those "unforeseen and inevitable disasters" which are ever starting up in the path of the Gladstone Ministry compels them soon after to go to the country—into what a state of confusion and uncertainty would our electoral machinery be thrown by the new voters, when an adequate redistribution of seats has not been settled! With the numerous difficul-

ties that confront the Government it is impossible that they can guarantee their ability to deal with the second instalment of the Representation of the People scheme at any given time. Next year the question of Irish coercion will again come up, and the condition of Ireland and the results of Mr Gladstone's policy there will require to be reviewed in full detail. Whatever progress we may be able to achieve in Egypt in the interval, it is evident that that country will still possess a strong claim upon the attention of the Parliament of 1885; and that the capacity of the Government for large measures of domestic legislation will be in a corresponding degree restricted.

If the House of Commons is really desirous of achieving some legislative work this Session, Lord John Manners's motion has a very strong claim upon its support. The time spent in discussing the Reform Bill in the House of Commons will simply be time wasted that might be employed in dealing with some of the other important subjects that are already under the consideration of Parliament. If the Government, by the aid of its mechanical majority, force the Bill through the Lower House, the Peers will certainly take the sense of the country upon the measure. But we trust such effectual opposition will be offered to its progress in the Commons, that the Government will still be convinced that the present time, with its numerous foreign anxieties and responsibilities, is not fitted for the consideration of so large a measure. Nor can such opposition be justly branded as obstruction. When a majority endeavours to force upon a minority a scheme which is unreasonable because of its incompleteness, and dangerous on account of the uncertainties by which it is

attended, no blame can attach to the minority for endeavouring to stave it off, or impede it by every means in its power. Nor can the Opposition, consistently with its duty to the country, allow the Government to neglect other matters in which our credit is implicated, for the sake of pushing forward a Bill which is mainly designed to restore its waning popularity. The Conservative party has already shown that it is not to be deterred from doing its duty by an outcry of obstruction on the part of the Government; and its spirited conduct during the present Session has done much to revive popular confidence, and stimulate enthusiasm in its exertions. Should the Bill be thrust upon the Upper House, we already know the reception which awaits it there. Lord Salisbury has courageously signified his intention to appeal to the people; and we cannot doubt that he will be strongly supported by his brother Peers. An endeavour will doubtless be made to raise the usual clamour that the House of Lords is the enemy of all progress, and ought, therefore, to be at once done away with. Such an outcry will draw no general response from the public. In consulting the nation upon a measure of doubtful expediency, the Peers will show an amount of confidence in the good sense of the electors which the Gladstone Ministry does not dare to repose in them. Nor can it be alleged that if the Peers reject the Bill, they will be thus conclusively showing their enmity to all reform. Their position is, that the Gladstone Government has introduced a measure without a mandate from the electors, which threatens to endanger the constitution, and that too at an unseasonable time, when public attention is

too distracted by graver cares to sufficiently consider its possible results. In giving the electors an opportunity to pronounce upon the Bill after its character has been made fully manifest by the debates in Parliament, the Conservative party is certainly doing them a service, which the constituencies will no doubt appreciate. Should, contrary to what may be expected from the sound sense of the British people, the country declare in favour of the Bill by itself, and without a measure of redistribution, its decision may be expected to exercise due influence upon the attitude of the Opposition with regard to the reform scheme.

Sir Charles Dilke, trembling lest the Opposition might be able to force a dissolution upon the Government's fatal mismanagement of the Soudan, hastened to declare that if they were driven to the country, the Egyptian question was not the only matter on which they would appeal to the people. This was a challenge which the Opposition will readily accept. The plain unvarnished tale of the results of four years of Gladstonian Government provides a more effective programme for the Conservative party than any exertion of political ingenuity could concoct. The Egyptian policy is but one of many disastrous blunders, although it is the one that comes most home to us at the present moment, sick as we are of bloodshed that might well have been avoided, and apprehensive that still further calamities are in store for us. The Opposition will be quite ready to fight the battle of Reform before the country, and to let the present electors know what the true significance of the Reform Bill is, so far as *they* are concerned. It will face any charge of obstruction that may be trumped up,

and show that in contesting unsound measures and endeavouring to sift a secret policy, which was only known by its disastrous results, it has been strictly within the limits of its duty to the country. If the electors are disgusted with the sham sentiment and specious promises which imposed upon them in 1880, and which now stand forth in all their natural hollowness and insincerity, they will have little difficulty in determining which side is the more worthy of their support.

A single glance at the present state of our relations with Egypt is enough to conclusively convince the country that Mr Gladstone won the last election campaign upon a policy which, if not false, so far as he and his colleagues were personally concerned, was at least an impossible one for the nation to follow. The Liberals claimed that their majority was a triumphant condemnation of what they called Lord Beaconsfield's Imperial policy; and they congratulated themselves that, under the guidance of Mr Gladstone and his Government, we were to steer clear of any external entanglements in the future. Let us grant that Mr Gladstone did endeavour to avoid any course of action approaching to an Imperial policy; and look to Egypt for the result. The Liberal standpoint of last elections will not be occupied during the next campaign. If Mr Gladstone has learnt anything from his last four years' experience of office, it must be that, in condemning an Imperial policy, he was presenting a false

issue to the country. His experience ought by this time to have convinced him that England, with her vital interests dispersed over every quarter of the globe, must maintain a vigilant guard over them; and that in her readiness to act in their behalf at any moment, our only secure guarantee for peace is to be found. Mr Gladstone scouted this policy of imperial vigilance at the hustings, and carried out his contempt in practice when in office: the result has been, that we have never been out of internal difficulties, or free from irritating and generally calamitous wars, during the whole time he has been at the head of affairs. Whether he deceived the country, or was himself deceived, when in 1880 he persuaded the electors to believe that the security of Britain depended upon her external interests being left to take care of themselves, he is suffering a terrible punishment in the disasters which he has been the chief agent in bringing about in the Soudan; and this reflection ought to lead himself and his colleagues to appear before the country in a chastened and humble spirit, very different from the lofty assurance with which they undertook to set everything right that they thought wrong only five short years ago. In 1880 they carried the constituencies, as they themselves allege, by their condemnation of an Imperial policy: when they next go to the country, it will be perforce as witnesses to the primary claim which an Imperial policy has upon every British Ministry.

BLACKWOOD'S

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXXIII.

MAY 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

FASHIONABLE PHILOSOPHY.

SCENE—*A London Drawing-room.* TIME—*5 o'clock P.M.*

The afternoon tea apparatus in one corner of the room, and Lady Fritterly on a couch in another. The Hon. Mrs Allmash is announced.

Lady Fritterly. How too kind, dear, of you to come, and so early, too! I've got such a lot of interesting people coming, and we are going to discuss the religion of the future.

Mrs Allmash. How quite delightful! I do so long for something more substantial than the theologies of the past! It is becoming quite puzzling to know what to teach one's children; mine are getting old enough now to understand about things, and one ought to teach them something. I was talking about it to that charming Professor Germseil last night.

Lady F. Well, I hope he is coming presently, so you will be able to continue your conversation. Then there is Mr Coldwaite, the celebrated Comtist; and Mr Fussle, who writes those delightful articles

on prehistoric æsthetic evolution; and Mr Drygull, the eminent theosophist, whose stories about esoteric Buddhism are quite too extraordinary, and who has promised to bring a Khoja—a most interesting moral specimen, my dear—who has just arrived from Bombay; and Lord Fondleton.

Mrs A. Lord Fondleton! I did not know that he was interested in such subjects.

Lady F. He says he is, dear; between ourselves—but this, of course, is strictly *entre nous*—I rather think that it is I who interest him: but I encourage him, poor fellow; it may wean him from the unprofitable life he is leading, and turn his mind to higher things. Oh! I almost forgot,—then there is my new beauty!

Mrs A. Your new beauty!

Lady F. Yes ; if you could only have dined with me the other night, you would have met her. I had such a perfect little dinner. Just think ! A poet, an actor, a journalist, a painter, a wit, and a new beauty. I'll tell you how I found her. She really belongs at present to Lady Islington and myself ; but of course, now we have started her, all the other people will snap her up. We found that we both owed that vulgar upstart, Mrs Houndsley, a visit, and went there together—because I always think two people are less easily bored than one—when suddenly the most perfect apparition you ever beheld stood before us ;—an old master dress, an immense pattern, a large hat rim encircling a face, some rich auburn hair inside, and the face a perfect one. Well, you know, it turned out that she was not born in the purple—her husband is just a clerk in Burley's Bank ; but we both insisted on being introduced to her—for, you see, my dear, there is no doubt about it, she is a ready-made beauty. The same idea occurred to Lady Islington, so we agreed as we drove away that we would bring her out. The result is, that she went to Islington House on Tuesday, and came to me on Thursday, and created a perfect furor on both occasions ; so now she is fairly started.

Mrs A. How wonderfully clever and fortunate you are, dear ! What is her name ?

Lady F. Mrs Gloring.

Mrs A. Oh yes ; everybody was talking about her at the Duchess's last night. I am dying to see her ; but they say that she is rather a fool.

Lady F. Pure spite and jealousy. Yet that is the way these Christian women of society obey the precept

of their religion, and love their neighbours as themselves.

[*Lord Fondleton is announced, accompanied by a stranger.*

Lord Fondleton. How d'ye do, Lady Fritterly ? I am sure you will excuse my taking the liberty of introducing Mr Rollestone, a very old friend of mine, to you ; he has only just returned to England, after an absence of so many years that he is quite a stranger in London.

[*Lady Fritterly is "delighted."*
The rest of the party arrive in rapid succession.

Mrs A. Dear Mr Germsell, I was just telling Lady Fritterly what an interesting conversation we were having last night when it was unfortunately interrupted. I shall be so glad if you would explain more fully now what you were telling me. I am sure everybody would be interested.

Lady F. Oh do, Mr Germsell, it would be quite too nice of you. And, Mr Drygull, will you ask the Khoja to—— ?

Mr Drygull. My friend's name is Ali Seyyid, Lady Fritterly.

Lady F. Pray excuse my stupidity, Mr Allyside, and come and sit near me. Lord Fondleton, find Mrs Gloring a chair.

Lord F. [*aside to Mrs Gloring*]. Who's our black friend ?

Mrs G. I am sure I don't know. I think Lady Fritterly called him a codger.

Lord F. Ah, he looks like it, —and a rum one at that, as our American cousins say.

Mrs G. Hush ! Mr Germsell is going to begin.

Mr Germsell. Mrs Allmash asked me last night whether my thoughts had been directed to the topic which is uppermost just now in so many minds in regard to the religion of the future, and I ven-

tured to tell her that it would be found to be contained in the generalised expediency of the past.

Mr Fussle. Pardon me, but the religion of the future must be the result of an evolutionary process, and I don't see how generalisations of past expediency are to help the evolution of humanity.

G. They throw light upon it; and the study of the evolutionary process so far teaches us how we may evolve in the future. For instance, you have only got to think of evolution as divided into moral, astronomic, geologic, biologic, psychologic, sociologic, æsthetic, and so forth, and you will find that there is always an evolution of the parts into which it divides itself, and that therefore there is but one evolution going on everywhere after the same manner. The work of science has been not to extend our experience, for that is impossible, but to systematise it; and in that systematisation of it will be found the religion of which we are in search.

D. May I ask why you deem it impossible that our experience can be extended?

G. Because it has itself defined its limits. The combined experience of humanity, so far as its earliest records go, has been limited by laws, the nature of which have been ascertained: it is impossible that it should be transcended without violation of the conclusions arrived at by positive science.

D. I can more easily understand that the conclusions arrived at by men of science should be limited, than that the experience of humanity should be confined by those conclusions; but I fail to perceive why those philosophers should deny the existence of cer-

tain human faculties, because they don't happen to possess them themselves. I think I know a Rishi who can produce experiences which would scatter all their conclusions to the winds, when the whole system which is built upon them would collapse.

Mrs G. [*aside to Lord Fondleton*]. Pray, Lord Fondleton, can you tell me what a Rishi is?

Lord F. A man who has got into higher states, you know—what I heard Mr Drygull call a transcendentalist the other day, whatever that may be. I don't understand much about these matters myself, but I take it he is a sort of evolved codger.

Mrs A. Oh, how awfully interesting! Dear Mr Drygull, do tell us some of the extraordinary things the Rishi can do.

D. If you will only all of you listen attentively, and if Mr Gernsell will have the goodness to modify to some degree the prejudiced attitude of mind common to all men of science, you will hear him as plainly as I can at this moment beating a tom-tom in his cottage in the Himalayas.

[*Mr G. gets up impatiently, and walks to the other end of the back drawing-room.*]

D. [*casting a compassionate glance after him*]. Perhaps it is better so. Now please, Lady Fritterly, I must request a few moments of the most profound silence on the part of all. You will not hear the sound as though coming from a distance, but it will seem rather like a muffled drumming taking place inside your head, scarcely perceptible at first, when its volume will gradually increase.

Lord F. [*aside to Mrs G.*] Some bad champagne produced the same phenomenon in my head last night.

Lady F. [*severely*]. Hush! Lord Fondleton.

[*There is a dead silence for some minutes.*]

Mrs G. [*excitedly*]. Oh, I hear it; it is something like a woodpecker inside of one.

D. Not a word, my dear madam, if you please.

Lady F. [*after a long pause*]. I imagine I hear a very faint something; there it goes—boom, boom, boom—at the back of my tympanum.

Lord F. That's not like a woodpecker.

Mrs G. No; it seems to me more like tic-tic-tic.

Mrs A. How too tiresome! I can't hear anything. I suppose it is on account of the rumble of the carriages.

Lord F. [*whispers to Mrs G.*] I hear something inside of me; do you know what?

Mrs G. No; what?

Lord F. The beating of my own heart. Can't you guess for whom?

Mrs G. No. Perhaps the Rishi makes it beat.

Lord F. Dear Mrs Gloring, you are the Rishi for whom——

Mrs G. Hush!

Lady F. There, it is getting louder, like distant artillery, and yet so near. Oh, Mr Drygull, what a wonderful man the Rishi must be!

D. Yes; he knew that at this hour to-day I should need an illustration of his power, and he is kindly furnishing us with one. This is an experience which I think our friend over there [*looking towards Mr Germseil*] would find it difficult to classify.

G. Fussle, have the goodness to step here for a moment—[*points to a woman beating a carpet in the back-yard of an adjoining house*].

That is the tom-tom in the Himalayas they are listening to.

F. Well, now, do you know, I don't feel quite sure of that. I was certainly conscious of a sort of internal hearing of something when you called me, which was not that; it was as though I had fiddlestrings in my head and somebody was beginning to strum upon them.

G. Fiddlestrings indeed,—say rather fiddlesticks. I am surprised at a sensible man like yourself listening to such nonsense.

F. [*testily*]. It is much greater nonsense for you to tell me I don't hear something I do hear, than for me to hear something you can't hear. You may be deaf, while my sense of hearing may be evolving. Can you hear what Lord Fondleton is saying to Mrs Gloring at this moment?

G. No, and I don't want to.

F. Ah, there it is. You won't hear anything you don't want to. Now I can, and he ought not to say it;—look how she is blushing. Oh, I forgot you are short-sighted. Well, you see, I can hear further than you, and see further than you. Why should you set a limit on the evolution of the senses, and say that no man in the future can ever hear or see further than men have in the past? How dare you, sir, with your imperfect faculties and your perfunctory method of research, which can only cover an infinitesimal period in the existence of this planet, venture to limit the potentialities of those laws which have already converted us from ascidians into men, and which may as easily evolve in us the faculty of hearing tom-toms in the Himalayas while we are sitting here, as of that articulate speech or intelligent reasoning which, owing to their operation, we now possess.

G. Pardon me, you do not possess them, Mr Fussle.

Lady F. Mr Fussle, might I ask you to take this cup of tea to Mrs Allmash? Mr Germself, it would be too kind of you to hand Mrs Gloring the cake.

F. [*savagely*]. We will continue this conversation at the Minerva.

Mrs A. [*apart to the Khoja*]. Oh, Mr Allyside, I am so glad to hear that you speak English so perfectly! I want you to tell me all about your religion; perhaps it may help us, you know, to find the religion of the future, which we are all longing for. And I am so interested in oriental religions! there is something so charmingly picturesque about them. I quite dote on those dear old Shastras, and Vedas, and Puranas; they contain such a lot of beautiful things, you know.

Ali Seyyid. I know as little, madam, of the Indian books you mention as I do of the Bible, which I have always heard was a very good book, and contained also a great many beautiful things. I am neither a Hindoo nor a Buddhist,—in fact, it is forbidden to me by my religion to tell you exactly what I am.

Mrs A. But indeed I won't tell anybody, if you will only confide in me. Oh, this mystery is too exquisitely delicious! Who knows, perhaps you might make a convert of me?

Ali S. [*with an admiring gaze*]. Madam, you would be a prize so well worth winning, that you almost tempt me. The first of our secrets is that we are all things to all men, until we are quite sure of the sympathy of the listener; then we venture a step further.

Mrs A. How wise that is! and how unlike the system adopted by

Christians! You may be sure of my most entire sympathy.

Ali S. The next principle is—but this is a profound secret, which you must promise not to repeat—the rejection of all fixed rules of religion or morality. It really does not matter in the least what you do: the internal disposition is the only thing of any value. Now, as far as I understand, you have already got rid of the religion, or you would not be looking for a new one; all you have to do is to get rid of the morality, and there you are.

Mrs A. [*with an expression of horror and alarm*]. Yes, there I should be indeed. Oh, Mr Allyside, what a dreadful man you are! Who started such an extraordinary doctrine?

Ali S. Well, his name was Hassan-bin-Saba—commonly known among Westerns as the “Old Man of the Mountain.” His followers, owing to the value they attached to murder as a remedial agent, have been known by the name of the “Assassins.”

Mrs A. Oh, good gracious!

Lady F. My dear Louisa, what is the matter? You look quite frightened.

Ali S. Mrs Allmash is a little alarmed because I proposed a new morality for the future, as well as a new religion.

Mr Coldwaite. Excuse me; but in discussions of this sort, I think it is most important that we should clearly understand the meanings of the terms we employ. Now I deny that any difference subsists between religion and morality. That any such distinction should exist in men's minds is due to the fact that dogma is inseparably connected with religion. If you eliminate dogma, what does religion consist of but morality? Substitute the

love of Humanity for the love of the Unknowable—which is the subject of worship of Mr Germsell; or of the Deity, who is the object of worship of the majority of mankind—and you obtain a stimulus to morality which will suffice for all human need. It is in this great emotion, as it seems to me, that you will find at once the religion and the morality of the future.

G. From what source do you get the force which enables you to love humanity with a devotion so intense that it shall elevate your present moral standard?

C. From humanity itself. I am not going to be entrapped into getting it from any unknowable source; the love of humanity, whether it be humanity as existing, or when absorbed by death into the general mass, is perpetually generating itself.

Mrs A. Then it must produce itself from what was there before; therefore it must be the same love, which keeps on going round and round.

Lord F. A sort of circular love, in fact. I've often felt it; but I didn't think it right to encourage it.

Lady F. Lord Fondleton, how can you be so silly? Don't pay attention to him, Mr Coldwaite. I confess I still don't see how you can get a higher love out of humanity than humanity has already got in it, unless you are to look to some other source for it.

C. Why, mayn't it evolve from itself?

G. How can it evolve without a propulsive force behind it? The thing is too palpable an absurdity to need argument. You can no more fix limits to the origin of force than you can destroy its persistency.

Lord F. [*aside*]. That seems to

me one of those sort of things no fellow can understand.

G. All you can say of it is that it is a conditioned effect of an unconditioned cause. That no idea or feeling arises, save as a result of some physical force expended in producing it, is fast becoming a commonplace of science; and whoever duly weighs the evidence will see that nothing but an overwhelming bias in favour of a preconceived theory can explain its non-acceptance. I think my friend, Mr Herbert Spencer, has demonstrated this conclusively.

C. Pardon me; do I understand you to say that the mental process which enabled Mr Spencer to elaborate his system of philosophy, or that the profound emotion which finds its expression in a love for humanity, are the result of physical force alone?

G. He says so himself, and he ought to know. His whole system of philosophy is nothing more nor less than the result of the liberation of certain forces produced by chemical action in the brain.

D. Then, if I understand you rightly, if the chemical changes which have been taking place for some years past in his brain had liberated a different set of forces, we should have had altogether a different philosophy.

G. The chemical changes would in that case have been different.

D. But the changes must be produced by forces acting on them.

G. Exactly: a force which has its source in the Unknowable produces a certain chemical action in the brain by which it becomes converted into thought or emotion, into love or philosophy, into art or religion, as the case may be: what the nature of that love or philosophy, or art or religion, may be

must depend entirely on the nature of the chemical change.

Lord F. [aside to Mrs Gloring]. I feel the most delightful chemical changes taking place now in my brain, dear Mrs Gloring. May I explain to you the exquisite nature of the forces that are being liberated, and which produce emotions of the most tender character.

Lady F. [sharply]. What are you saying, Lord Fondleton?

Lord F. Ahem—I was saying—ahem—I was saying that we shall be having some Yankee inventing steam thinking-mills and galvanic loving-batteries soon. What a lot of wear and tear it would save! I should go about covered with a number of electric love-wires for the force to play upon.

F. I think this matter wants clearing up, Mr Germsell. Why don't you write a book on mental and emotional physics?

Mr Rolleston. I would venture with great diffidence to remark that the confusion seems to me to arise from the limit we attach to the meaning of the word employed. It may be quite true that no idea or emotion can exist except as the result of physical force; but it is also true that its effect must be conditioned on the quality of the force. There is as wide a difference between the physical forces operant in the brain, and which give rise to ideas, and those which move a steam-engine, as there is between mind and matter. Both, as Mr Germsell will admit, are conditioned manifestations of force; but the one contains a vital element in its dynamism which the other does not. You may apply as much physical force by means of a galvanic battery to a dead brain as you please, but you can't strike an idea out of it; and this vital force, while it is "conditioned

force," like light, heat, motion, and matter, differs in its mode of manifestation from every other manifestation of force, even more than they do from each other, in that it possesses a potency inherent to it, which they have not, and this potency it is which creates emotion and generates ideas. The fallacy which underlies the whole of this system of philosophy is contained in the assumption that there is only one description of physical force in nature.

G. No more there is. Why, Mr Spencer says that the law of metamorphosis, which holds among the physical forces, holds equally between them and the mental forces; but mark you, what is the grand conclusion at which he arrives? I happen to remember the passage. "How this metamorphosis takes place; how a force existing, as motion, heat, or light, can become a mode of consciousness; how it is possible for aerial vibrations to generate the sensation we call sound; or for the forces liberated by chemical changes in the brain to give rise to emotion,—these are mysteries which it is impossible to fathom."

Lord F. [aside to Mrs Gloring]. What a jolly easy way of getting out of a difficulty!

D. Of course, if you admit such gross ignorance as to how it is possible for aerial vibrations to generate the sensations we call sound, I don't wonder at your not hearing the tom-tom in the Himalayas we were listening to just now. If you knew a little more about the astral law under which aerial vibrations may be generated, you would not call things impossible which you admit to be unfathomable mysteries. If it is an unfathomable mystery how a sound is projected a mile, why do you refuse to admit the

possibility of its being projected two, or two hundred, or two thousand? Under the laws which govern mysteries, which you say are unfathomable, if the mystery is unfathomable, so is the law, and you have no right to limit its action.

R. To come back to the question of a possible distinction in the essential or inherent qualities of dynamic or physical forces. There is nothing in the hypothesis which may not be reasonably assumed and tested by experiment; and before any man has a right to affirm that there is only one quality of physical force in nature, which, by undergoing transformation and metamorphosis, shall account for all its phenomena, I have a right to ask whether the hypothesis, that there may be another, has been experimentally tested. It would then be time for me to accept the conclusion that there is only one, and that it is an unfathomable mystery how this one force should be able to perform all the functions attributed to it.

G. I admit that the forces called vital are correlates of the forces called physical, if you choose to call that a distinction; but their character is conditioned by the state of the brain, and it comes to the same thing in the end. The seat of emotion as well as of thought is the brain, and it entirely depends on its chemical constitution, on its circulation, and on other causes affecting that organ, what you think, and feel, and say, and do. People's characters differ because their brains do, not because there is any difference in the vital force which animates them.

R. You might as well say that sounds differ because their aerial vibrations differ, but those vibrations only differ because the force

makes them differ which is acting upon them. They don't generate tunes, but convey them. And the result, so far as our hearing is concerned, depends upon what are called the acoustic conditions under which the vibrations take place. Just so the brain possesses no generating function of its own; it deals with and transmits the ideas and emotions projected upon it according to the organic conditions by which it may be affected at the time, whether those ideas and emotions are produced by external stimuli, or apparently, but only apparently, as I believe, owe their origin to genesis in the brain itself. In the one case the brain is vibrating to the touch of an external force, in the other to one that is internal and unseen, just as the air does when it transmits sound, whether you see the cause which produces it or not; and the mystery which remains to be fathomed, but which I do not admit to be unfathomable until somebody tries to fathom it, is the nature of those unseen forces.

G. How would you propose to try and fathom it?

R. By experiment: I know of no other way. The forces which generate emotions and ideas must possess a moral quality: the experiments must therefore be moral experiments.

G. How do you set to work to experimentalise morally?

R. As the process must of necessity be a purely personal one, carried on, if I may use the expression, in one's own moral organism, I have a certain delicacy in attempting to describe it. In fact, Lady Fritterly, if you will allow me to say so, as the whole subject which has been under discussion this afternoon is the most profoundly solemn which can engage

the attention of a human being, I shrink from entering upon it as fully as I would do under other circumstances. If people begin to want a new religion because it is the fashion to want one, I venture to predict that they will never find it. If they want a new religion because they can't come up to the moral standard of the one they have got, then I would advise them to look rather to that unseen force within them, which I have been attempting to describe to Mr Gernsell, for the potency which may enable them to reach it.

Lady F. Indeed, Mr Rollestone, we are all exceedingly in earnest. I never felt so serious in my life. Of course this London life must all seem very frivolous to you ; but that we can't help, you know. We can't all go away and make moral experiments like you. What we feel is, that we ought all to endeavour as much as possible to introduce a more serious tone into society. We want to get rid of the selfishness, and the littlenesses, and the petty ambitions and envyings, and the scandals that go on. Don't we, Louisa, dear ? And you can't think how grateful I am to Lord Fondleton for having given me the pleasure of your acquaintance. I hope I may often see you ; I am sure you would do us all so much good. You will always find me at home on Sunday afternoons at this hour.

Mrs A. It is so refreshing to meet any one so full of information and earnestness as you are, in this wicked, jaded London. Please go on, Mr Rollestone ; what you were saying was so interesting. Have you really been experimenting on your own moral organism ? How quite too extraordinary !

Lord F. [*aside to Mrs Gloring*]. By Jove ! I had no idea old Rollestone could come out in this line. He is a regular dark horse. I should never have suspected it. He will be first favourite in London this season, and win in a canter.

C. You will excuse me, Mr Rollestone, but I really am interested, and I really am serious. It was with no idle curiosity that I was waiting to hear your answer to Mr Gernsell's inquiry, as to the nature of the moral experiment necessary to test the character of this unseen force.

R. I can only say that any experiment which deals with the affectional and emotional part of one's nature must be painful in the extreme. There is, indeed, only one motive which would induce one to undergo the trials, sufferings, sacrifices, and ordeals which it involves—and that is one in which you will sympathise : it is the hope that humanity may benefit by the result of one's efforts. Indeed, any lower motive than this would vitiate them. I will venture to assert to Mr Gernsell, who is so sceptical as to the existence of any other quality in that force, which he can only fathom so far as to know that it is physical, that I will put him through a course of experiment which will cause him more acute moral suffering than his brain could bear, unless it was sustained by a force which by that experimental process will reveal attributes contained in it not dreamt of in his philosophy.

G. I have no doubt you could strain my mind until it was weak enough to believe anything, even your fantastic theories. Thank you, I would rather continue to experiment with my own microscope and forceps than let you ex-

periment either upon my affections or my brains.

F. [*aside to Mr Rolleston*]. You could not make anything of them even if he consented—the former don't exist, and the latter are mere putty—but I can quite understand your desire to begin *in corpore vili*.

Lord F. [*aside to Mrs Gloring*]. Allow me freely to offer you my affections as peculiarly adapted to experiments of this nature.

R. It has always struck me as strange that men of science, who don't shrink from testing, for instance, the value of poisons, or the nature of disease, by heroically subjecting their own external organs to their action, should shrink from experimenting on that essential if remote vitalising force, which can only be reached by moral experiment, and disorder in which produces not only moral obliquity and mental alienation, but physical disease as well.

F. Thus a man may die of apoplexy brought on by a fit of passion. Cure his temper, and you lessen the danger of apoplexy; that, I take it, is an illustration of what you mean.

R. In its most external application it is; the question is where his bad temper comes from, and whether, as Mr Gernsell would maintain, it is entirely due to his cerebral condition, and not to the moral qualities inherent in the force, which, acting on peculiar cerebral conditions, causes one man's temper to differ from another's. It is not the liberated force which generates the temper. For that you have to go farther back; and the reason why research is limited in this direction is not because it is impossible to go farther back, but because it must inevitably entail, as I have already

said, acute personal suffering. Nor, as these experiments must be purely personal, and involve experiences of an entirely novel kind, is it possible to discuss them except with those who have participated in them. One might as well attempt to describe the emotion of love to a man whose affections had never been called forth. If I have alluded to them so fully now, it is because they justify me in making the assertion, for which I can offer no other proof than they have afforded to me personally, that a force does exist in nature possessing an inherent spiritual potency—I use the word for lack of a better—which is capable of lifting humanity to a higher moral plane of daily living and acting than that which it has hitherto attained. But I fear I am trespassing on your patience in having said thus much.

Lady F. Oh no, Mr Rolleston; please go on. There is something so delightfully fresh and original in all you are saying, I can't tell you how much you interest me.

G. [*aside*]. I know a milkmaid quite as fresh and rather more original. [*Aloud, looking at his watch.*] Bless me! it is past six, and I have an appointment at the club at six. So sorry to tear myself away, dear Lady Fritterly. I can't tell you how I have enjoyed the intellectual treat you have provided for me.

Lady F. I thank you so much for coming. I hope you will often look in on our Sundays. I think you know that these little conversations are so very improving.

G. You may rely upon me; it is impossible to imagine anything more interesting. [*Mutters as he leaves the room.*] No, Lady Fritterly, this is the last time I enter this house, except perhaps to dinner. You don't catch me again

making one of your Sunday collection of bores and idiots. What an insufferable prig that Rolleston is!

F. [aside to Drygull]. Thank heaven, that pompous nuisance has taken himself off!

D. [aside to Fussle]. I don't know which I dislike most—the Pharisee of science or the Pharisee of religion.

R. If, then, you admit that the human organism not only cannot generate force, but that the emotions which control the body are in their turn generated by a force which is behind it, but which is dependent for its manifestation on its own special conditions, as well as those of its transmitting organic medium, I venture to assert that experiment in the direction I have suggested will prove to our consciousness that the moral or spiritual quality of the original invading force is a pure one, and that the degree of its pollution in the human frame is the effect of inherited and other organic conditions; and the question which presents itself to the experimentalist is, whether by an effort of the will this same force may not be evoked to change and purify those conditions. Indeed the very effort is in itself an invocation, and if made unflinchingly, will not fail to meet with a response. Much that has heretofore been to earnest seekers unknowable will become knowable, and a love, Mr Coldwaite, higher, if that be possible, than the love of humanity, yet correlative with and inseparable from it, will be found pressing with an irresistible potency into those vacant spaces of the human heart, which have from all time yearned for a closer contact with the Great Source of all love and of all force. It is in this attempt to sever the love of hu-

manity from its Author that the Positivist philosophy has failed: it is the worship of a husk without the kernel, of a body without the soul; and hence it will never satisfy the human aspiration. That aspiration is ever the same; it needs, if you will allow me to say so, Lady Fritterly, no new religion to satisfy its demands. If the world is of late beginning to feel dissatisfied with Christianity, it is not because the moral standard which that religion proposes is not sufficiently lofty for its requirements, but because, after eighteen hundred years of effort, it has altogether failed to reach that standard. Christianity seems a failure because Christians have failed—have failed to understand its application to everyday life, have failed to embody it in practice, and have sought an escape from the apparent impossibility of doing so, by smothering it with dogmas and diverting its scope from this world to the next. It will be time to look for a new religion when we have succeeded in the literal application of the ethics of the one we have got to the social and economic problems of daily life. It is not by any intellectual effort or scientific process that the discovery will be made of how this is to be done, but by the introduction into the organism of new and unsuspected potencies of moral force which have hitherto lain dormant in nature, waiting for the great invocation of wearied and distressed humanity. There can be no stronger evidence of the approach of this new force, destined to make the ethics of Christianity a practical social standard, than the growing demand of society for a new religion. It is the inarticulate utterance of the quickened human aspiration, in itself a proof that these new potencies are already

stirring the dry bones of Christendom, and a sure earnest that their coming in answer to that aspiration will not be long delayed.

D. Of course, I entirely disagree with you as to any such necessity in regard to the moral requirements of the world existing. You must have met, in the course of your travels, that more enlightened and initiated class of Buddhists, with whom I sympathise, who are quite indifferent to considerations of this nature.

R. And who were too much occupied with their subjective prospects in Nirvana, to be affected by the needs of terrestrial humanity.

D. Quite so.

Mrs A. And, Mr Allyside, I am afraid you are equally indifferent.

Ali S. I am certainly not indifferent to the discovery of any force latent in Christendom which may check the force of its cupidity, and put a stop to the *exploitation* and subjugation of Eastern countries for the sake of advancing its own material interests, under the specious pretext of introducing the blessings of civilisation.

C. You have certainly presented the matter in a light which is altogether new to me, Mr Rollestone, and upon which, therefore, I am not now prepared to express an opinion. I should like to discuss the subject with you further privately.

R. It is a subject which should never be discussed except privately.

Mrs A. Now, I should say, Mr Rollestone, on the contrary, that it was just a subject you ought to write a book about. You would have so much to tell,—all your personal experiments, you know; now do.

F. Take my advice, Mr Rollestone, and don't. You would have

very few readers, and those who read you would only sneer at what they would call your crude ideas; and indeed, you will excuse me for saying so, but I am not sure that they would not be right.

Lord F. I quite disagree with you, Mr Fussle. If Rollestone would write a book which would put a stop to this "religion of the future" business, he would earn the gratitude of society. Do you know, I am getting rather bored with it.

F. Not if he introduced instead a latent force, which should overturn all existing institutions, and revolutionise society—which it would inevitably have to do if we were all coerced by it into adopting literally the ethics of Christianity, instead of merely professing them. Why, the "Sermon on the Mount" alone, practised to the letter, would produce a general destruction. Church and State, and the whole economic system upon which society is based, would melt away before it like an iceberg under a tropical sun. I don't mind discussing the religion of the future as a subject of interesting speculation; but, depend upon it, we had better let well alone. It seems to me that we—at least those of us who are well off—have nothing to complain of. Let us trust to the silent forces of evolution. See how much they have lately done for us in the matter of art. What can be pleasanter than this gentle process of æsthetic development which our higher faculties are undergoing? With due deference to Mr Rollestone, I think we shall be far better employed in cultivating our taste, than in probing our own organisms in the hope of discovering forces which may enable us to apply a perfectly unpractical system of morality, to a

society which has every reason to be satisfied with the normal progress it is making.

Mrs G. Indeed, Mr Rolleston, I agree with you a great deal more than with Mr Fussle. I should like to call out a higher moral force in myself—but I should never have the courage to undergo all the ordeals you say it would involve; I am too weak to try.

Lord F. Of course you are,—don't! You are much nicer as you are. Why, Rolleston, you would make all the women detestable if you could have your way.

R. I don't think there is any immediate cause for alarm on that score.

Mrs A. [*rising*]. Dearest Augusta, I am afraid I must run away: thank you so much, for *such* a treat. [*All rise.*] Mrs Gloring, we have all been so deeply interested, that we have scarcely been able to exchange a word, but I

hope we shall see a great deal of each other this year. I have a few people coming to me to-morrow evening; do you think you can spare a moment from your numerous engagements? Lady Fritterly and Lord Fondleton are coming; and perhaps, Mr Drygull, you will come, and bring Mr Allyside. Mr Fussle, I know it is useless to expect you; and I cannot venture to ask Mr Rolleston to anything so frivolous. But perhaps you will dine with me on Thursday—you will meet some congenial spirits.

R. Thank you, but I fear it will be impossible, as I leave London to-morrow. Good-bye, Lady Fritterly. Forgive me, an utter stranger, for having so far obtruded my experiences upon you, and for venturing finally to suggest that it is in our own hearts that we should search for the religion that we need; for is it not written, "The kingdom of heaven is within you"?

A LADY'S RIDE ACROSS SPANISH HONDURAS. — CONCLUSION.

"ESTOY SOLTERA; VOY CON DIOS" (I am alone; I go with God).—*Spanish Axiom.*

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN the hour came round for starting on the following morning, I, for the first time during this journey, evinced the greatest reluctance to depart; for never had I been so comfortably lodged, or enjoyed so much privacy.

I could not help saying this much to the *padrona*, when she brought me a capital breakfast, nicely laid out on a tray covered with fair linen.

"Put off the start for an hour," said she; "your men are languid this morning, for they made the most of their holiday yesterday, and are disposed to rest. I will take you round the farm; the morning is cool as yet."

We went to the dairy farm, where there were a large number of beautiful cows with their calves, which gave plenty of occupation to four or five lads and girls, who, though poorly clad, looked healthy and bright. Two young women were busy in the laundry, from whence the clean smell of wood-ashes boiling in a caldron to make the lye announced that linen washed in that establishment would get fair play, and not be bedevilled with chemical soaps and other abominations, the only use of which is to save the necessary hand and arm work of the washerwoman (so called), and destroy the material.

Skirting a small bakehouse, we passed through a gate into the garden. This was only in course of formation, and was evidently the pride of the *padrona*. It was delightful to find sweet-peas and

mignonette growing in a nicely laid out border; indeed, in this delicious air and at this elevation, many English flowers would flourish luxuriantly. My hostess possessed a large collection of garden seeds, and she was trying experiments with all in their turn.

Among the deciduous plants, I was 'shown a pretty flowering shrub called the "*Spinarosa*." I perceive, by the way, that a perfumery-house in London is advertising a new scent which bears this name. May all success attend it! for nothing can be more delicate than the fragrance of the *Spinarosa* flower; and, like pure water, its specific virtue is imperceptible, though perfection is the virtue which characterises it as a whole. The *padrona* had imported two of these shrubs from Guatemala, but I believe the plant is to be found in the Honduras also.

Time will not halt even in Vera Cruz, and soon Marcos hunted me to the garden, with the intimation that I must mount speedily. On returning to the house to complete preparations, I found amongst my effects some cotton print, which I presented to my kind hostess, as it was enough to make a dress for her little girl. I had bought the material, together with some good embroidery, to make a short dressing-gown for myself—so this, fortunately, made the gift a respectable one. As to accepting any remuneration in the shape of money for my entertainment, the kind creature quite repudiated the idea. "She was so happy to receive one with whom

she could converse," she said; "and was I not a 'Soltera'? and why was this? and oh! the world was so hard."

Thus speaking, the *padrona* walked at the mule's head, and led me down through the broken fences which bounded the untidy land outside her domain into a lovely dell, down which sparkled a running stream, babbling musically, and seeming to cast up diamonds of yellow light upon Luisa's hoofs, as she splashed into the centre of its bed. There we parted, with the sisterly kiss of peace, and I carried away with me a very tender memory of Vera Cruz. *Ay di mi!* Vera Cruz; True Cross. May not its signification in part be realised in all the realms of earth, where parting, even with a stranger, gives the heart a pang?

The path became very stony in a couple of hours after leaving the dell, and we pronounced it to be only inferior in disagreeables to a valley of flint, some miles in length, which we traversed after we had long left Comayagua behind us.

Here Luisa was startled by a heifer which plunged out of a hedge on hearing our approach, and so took me into the depths of a thicket, wherein I lost my veil and the brim of one side of my hat. This loss may appear too insignificant to record; but the effect of this slight accident was, that at night, the skin of the one side of my throat and face was peeled away in strips, and it was some days before the pain quite left me. Such is the strength of the fierce heat of the noonday sun in Honduras.

The penalty of our late start was paid not only by having to suffer great heat, but also by the necessity of rapid travelling. We had literally wandered up hill and down stream. As the evening

waned we found ourselves entering upon a large tract of plain upon which nothing seemed to grow but tall grass of a pale-green colour, and a few distorted shrubs.

What was that in the distance? It appeared like the monument of a woman placed on a high pedestal, and nearer was another which bore the form of a lion couchant. Now we passed a group of enormous boulder-like stones, some of which present an uncouth and grotesque resemblance to lions and to dogs. Far away on the plain, detached and scattered, rose up those enormous stones; some without any definable shape—others, again, gigantic and weird-like in the deepening shadow of the evening. I remembered that we had to cross over a bend of the river Palenque, and the thought darts through my mind that these stones might in some way belong to the curious ruins found by Messrs Stephens and Catherwood in their researches through Central America, and at Palenque especially. But so far as I have seen, these stones bear no sculpture, nor do they convey the idea that they have ever belonged to temple or palace, or that they have been connected in one building of any kind.

Presently I halted with the intention to examine a small stone, close to which I passed; but Marcos prevented this, with the strongest determination expressed in the grip of his lean brown hand. "Es un mal lugar" (it is a bad place), said he; "un lugar de los muertos" (a place of the dead). I attempted no more, for the increasing darkness and the silence of my attendants communicated a chill to my own spirits. The only clear idea in my mind was, that we were not far from Omoa, and Omoa is not many miles away from Copan—the place whereat Mr Stephens, if I mistake

not, met with the most elaborate of the sculptured idols.

My attendants, though they made no sign, were evidently scared. They kept the animals closer together, and we proceeded at a very brisk trot. One of the shapes reminded me so much of the story in the 'Arabian Nights' of the man who was transformed partially into marble, that, in association with the surroundings, I began to wonder if this also were not an Arabian Night's dream.

The rest were a little in front of me, for the path had narrowed, and we were passing on the side of a clump of trees. Suddenly a dark mass, preceded by a rush, fell on Luisa's neck. She nearly jumped her own height from the ground; and I mechanically drew the revolver from the leather pocket which hung at my girdle and fired, throwing the weapon down in a fright at what I had done. The *machetes* of the two men were in the body of the mass simultaneously, and I learned that I had fired into the tail of what on inspection turned out to be a coyote. A coyote here is said to be the offspring of the dog and the fox. They are dangerous if met with in packs. This turned out to be a half-starved creature, which might have been attracted by some dried venison-meat which was dangling at the saddle of the *macho* mule which Eduardo was leading just in front. To my surprise, Luisa was not in the least restive; the *macho*, on the contrary, made violent attempts to wrench the rein from Eduardo and bolt.

"Now, Señora," said Marcos, as he picked up the revolver, "you must ride quick, very quick; this beast may have a mate. They are seldom alone, and that might be perilous. *Vamos, despacheo*" (Let us go with speed).

We mounted accordingly, Marcos flying ahead with rapid step, and we following at a good pace, till we had left the plain behind us. It was nearly dark when we drew up at the gate of a maize-field, through which Marcos passed; for he had with his hawk's eye descried the roof of a dwelling jutting out just beyond it.

Riding through the field, we came in front of the building, which was low and covered by an overhanging thatch—this serving evidently as a verandah. The whole place looked so miserable that I urged the guides to ride on, or even to try and reach Potrerillos (our station for San Pedro Sula), as the moon was full, and the road perfectly plain. By this time an old man, followed by his family, came to the edge of a wide trench, which separated the garden and hut from where we waited, and inquired what we wanted.

Marcos told him to put back his three lean dogs, which barked furiously the whole time, and then he would tell him.

A discussion ensued, and the upshot was that we must decide to remain where we were, at least till daybreak.

"It is not safe to go on," the old man said; "the *malagente* (bad people, or robbers) are about in these parts." It was for that reason that he had dug this wide trench before his garden, and put his dogs to sleep in it at dusk.

Discretion at this juncture was certainly the better part of valour; and the plank which belonged to this excavation being laid across it, we entered the dominions of Señor Juan Masaveo. This individual prided himself upon being a Spaniard of pure race, and told us that he belonged to Catalonia. A cursory glance at the premises convinced me that I had better lie

down, as I was, in my hammock ; and so this article was swung in the cart-shed, which had been newly thatched. The youngest dog turned out to be a most friendly little beast, and a few scraps which I gave him made him a firm ally ; whereupon, an intimacy being established, he laid himself down under the hammock—and I think he was quite equal to making a dash, on my account, upon any intruder who might venture into the shed, or molest me in any way.

At the earliest glint of dawn Eduardo thrust in his face, and announced that there was nothing to eat, and that the mules (which had certainly been better off) could be ready in an hour.

"We cannot get any milk here, Señora," the lad continued, "until the *vaca* (cow) comes down from her pasture on the hillside."

"When is this *vaca* likely to appear?" I asked. "Does not the woman know?"

The reply was conveyed in that inimitable shrug of the shoulders and flourish of the hand with which the Hondureians answer inquiries and solve difficulties.

"What do these people live on themselves?" I persisted; for I was weak from want of food, and I thought the cow might be as necessary for some of them as for me.

"Oh, raw plantains, dried venison, and a kind of soup made of maize. The men had this before going to work."

"Then there is nothing for us to depend upon but this *vaca*," I said. "Can she not be searched for? I would pay for it."

"She will come when she chooses," replied Eduardo, never making the least attempt or suggestion that he might go and seek the animal himself. "I have brought you some water, Señora,"

he continued; "they have a nice well here."

The water was a blessing, and after using it freely, I felt better, and able to start for Potrerillos. The idea of getting away was a tonic in itself.

The men had fallen back upon a few strips of dried venison, but the mules had been fully fed and watered; and I was pleased to find that, by dint of good travelling, we might reach Potrerillos by ten o'clock in the morning.

My host, old and poor as he was, accompanied me over the chasm, mounted me, and walked a short distance at the mule's head. I asked him if he could tell me anything about the stones and the plain we had passed through on the preceding night. He shook his head, and only replied that it was a place of the dead—dead many centuries ago. That was all he knew, he said.

At the parting, on a turn between two slopes, Eduardo handed up the little dog, and the old man literally glowed with pleasure when I put a *peseta* (10d.) between his paws, and gave him a tender pat. His owner promised to be kind to him for my sake, and then, with the benison, "El buen Dios le guarde muchos años!" (May God spare you many years!), the old man doffed his cap and went his way.

Ten o'clock found us at Potrerillos, and after making inquiry, we rode up to the house of Monsieur St Laurent, who, it appears, held the position of head-man of the town. This position throughout Honduras is a post very difficult to define or explain; and how the individual occupying it arrives at this dignity, I found it equally impossible to fathom. It depends neither on age, nor talent, nor length of residence in the place. I drew

the conclusion, at last, that some one individual possessing a little more energy than usual, combined with some commercial stake in the country, assumed the leadership of the community, and the community fell in with the arrangement as a matter of course, it being a convenience generally, and a saving of trouble to all.

Monsieur St Laurent received us very courteously, but he imparted a piece of information which, for the time being, was highly unsatisfactory to me, and this was that the railway between Potrerillos and San Pedro Sula was quite unserviceable; in fact it had become so broken down that for some months the railway plant had been taken away, and nothing was left but the rails and a broken-down bridge or two. "We have now to ride to San Pedro Sula," said M. St Laurent; "the road is very good, and it is under fifty miles' distance. Rest here, if you like, to-night, and set off at four to-morrow morning; you will then reach San Pedro easily in the afternoon."

But Marcos here intervened. He had been engaged, he said, by contract to take the lady to the railway station at Potrerillos. Well, there was no railway station; further, he was to be paid in the head-house of Potrerillos in the presence of the head-man. Well, there was the head-man; let the lady fulfil her part of the contract and pay him, and let him depart."

In vain did Monsieur St Laurent urge the muleteer to finish the journey, and take me on to San Pedro. He was obdurate, and even an appeal to his self-interest was, for a wonder, quite superfluous. He had gained as much as he wanted, the man said, and the lady could hire fresh mules here. It was not worth his while to cross the Palenque either; he

wished to return quickly, for he hoped to sell the *macho* and the baggage-mule at Vera Cruz. So pronouncing, Marcos drew his copy of our contract from his pocket, and flourished it before Monsieur St Laurent.

For the benefit of those who have not made mule-journeys, I subjoin a copy of this contract, which may prove useful to intending mountain travellers. No one should travel far without being provided with a form of this kind; as it, being stamped with the Government seal, serves as a protection in out-of-the-way places, besides acting as a restriction, if necessary, on the muleteer.

Copy of Contract (Translation).

"I, Marcos Carcamo, undertake to conduct Señora 'Soltera' to the railway station at Potrerillos for San Pedro Sula, charging twelve *pesos* (crowns) for each one of three mules, and eleven *pesos* for myself as muleteer and confidential man of the said lady,—the whole amounting to forty-seven *pesos*.

"And we both and each agree that this money shall be paid to me by Señora 'Soltera' in the head-house (for the security of each of us) at Potrerillos at the end of the journey.

"Given at Goascaron, this fourteenth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one.

(Signed) "MARCOS CARCAMO.
"MARIA 'SOLTERA,'
"or MARY LONE.

(Stamped)
"Twelve *reales*."

Here follows the receipt.

"I have received the amount of forty-seven *pesos*, as promised above, and I am thoroughly satisfied. MARCOS CARCAMO.

"Witnesses.
"EDUARDO ALBAREZ.
"ALFREDO ST LAURENT."

Marcos signed his name in such good handwriting that M. St Laurent inquired where he had been taught.

"The good priest who was kind to the Indians taught me," he answered. "I knew more some years ago; but now he is dead and gone, I don't care to learn from any one else; besides, I am too old."

He then turned to me, and asked me to furnish him with a certificate testifying to his efficiency as a guide, and also to his having served me with fidelity.

This I did cheerfully, and then he went out with Eduardo, and dismounted the luggage, and took off my saddle from Luisa's back. I came out to wish this tried friend a kind good-bye, and Marcos was so pleased that he said he should tell of the incident in Goascaron. The English lady had kissed his mule!

Doubtless it might be considered a gushing thing to do, but I am not ashamed of the action, and I shall ever feel grateful to this patient intelligent creature for the way in which she carried me—never flagging, never sulky, and wanting no reward but a handful of bread and salt. Had Marcos been as tender-hearted as she, I might have ridden her to San Pedro Sula. The knowledge of this made my adieus to her owner rather frigid.

"As you oblige me to hire other animals and another guide, Marcos," I said, "I cannot add any present to your pay. Good-bye to you, and take care of Luisa."

Madame St Laurent now joined us, and invited me to come into the private part of her house and take some refreshment. Eduardo was handed over to the *mozo* of the house, and we were both so thankful for our quarters that the question of getting to San Pedro did not for the moment trouble us.

I found Madame St Laurent very agreeable and friendly, and she was also a woman of advanced education. Our conversation soon verged round to the gentleman in whom I was so much interested. "Do you know that he is expected here to-day?" she inquired.

"No," I replied; "unless he has come to meet me, in answer to a telegram I sent him from Comayagua."

"I do not think that is likely; as we hear that he is on the way to Comayagua. He stays at a house in this town when he passes through, and if he arrives to-day, I shall know of it, and will let you know. If he does not appear, it is possible that you may meet him on the road to-morrow."

"Very strange, is it not, that he should be leaving San Pedro just as I enter it?"

Madame smiled, and looked at her husband, and then said—"There has been a great change in the colony during the last few months: several of the colonists have returned home; others have gone to Guatemala; very few remain there now."

"Are you sure of this, Madame?" I asked.

"Quite sure, for many families pass through here, and they speak more or less freely; it seems they have been deceived in many ways. They complained solely of one person; and the only fault they find with the Government is, that it has allowed itself to be hoodwinked by this man, and is so slow in redressing their wrongs."

"What are these particular wrongs?"

"It is said that when he chartered the vessel to bring these colonists here, he made the majority of them confide their money to him, and that they cannot get a settlement. Then there is a notion abroad that he is no priest, but a

former Protestant minister, who came here with questionable recommendations. However, there is no doubt about his suspension, as another priest is appointed to his cure. I am glad of this for your sake, for the new priest is a quiet and earnest man."

"I was told at Comayagua that the person in question does not recognise his sentence of suspension," I answered.

"That is absurd," replied Madame, "for the church is locked up, and the *alcalde* will only give up the key to the newly appointed priest. It is said that his predecessor will never be reinstated. Indeed, how can it be otherwise? It is a great pity, for no one entered upon an undertaking with finer prospects. The Government was liberal; the Presbyterian *alcalde* and the Protestant consul at Puerto Cortez both helped, and were anxious to receive the colonists."

"And these," intervened Monsieur St Laurent, "were mostly of a respectable class of Irish small farmers. They brought a little money, and I think with a different leader they would have done well. Land has been given whereon to build a school, but the school is not even begun."

"What could induce him to write and engage me to come and superintend this school?" I inquired.

Madame laughed. "I cannot say," she said at length; "but I daresay you will get that explained at San Pedro. Now, if you will go and rest, we will see what we can do in getting you mules. I know of one which you can ride, and that is the principal part of the business."

A room like a small barn was assigned to me, and Madame had sent in a bath, water, and towels;

and Eduardo, having looked to my comforts, asked leave to go with Monsieur St Laurent's *mozo* to look after a mule for himself and a baggage-mule.

"There is a very good muleteer in Potrerillos just now," the lad said; "he has only been back one day from a long journey; his name is Andreas, and he is well known. I am recommended to apply to him."

I did not meet my kind hosts till sundown, and then Madame knocked and entered with a glass of white wine and a biscuit in her hand. "Will you come and see my garden," said she, "and then take supper with us at eight o'clock?"

This invitation was most acceptable, and the garden was in every respect a pleasant garden, and one which testified most thoroughly to the clever and perfect manner in which the French all over the world utilise space, and ornament unsightly places. The vine and some luxuriant creepers shadowed the deep embrasured windows, and the palisades round the house were painted a cool green, through which the lovely fringe-tree, shortened and pruned, was twisted thickly enough to thoroughly shade the plants within. A large barrel kept for watering the garden was so deeply shrouded by clematis that it appeared to be literally embedded in a huge white muff. Rows of magnificent balsams, mostly of red and orange colours, were planted regularly on either side of a broad gravel-walk, and here it was that Madame and I walked and talked until supper-time.

At that meal Eduardo waited, and I found that everything was prepared for the start at five o'clock on the morrow. The muleteer, Andreas, was to come with us, and the Palenque river would be

crossed in a canoe : the only trouble on the way would be the loading and unloading the animals, and to this we had become accustomed.

Even here the demon of unpunctuality held its sway, and notwithstanding all the efforts of Monsieur St Laurent, it was fully an hour past the appointed time before we started for San Pedro Sula. In spite of the hot sun, Madame came out with a mosquito-net over her head to say good-bye, attended by the *mozo*, bearing a cup of coffee made in the perfect manner which seems to be a heaven-born gift of the French.

A kind adieu did these good friends give me, and as Andreas was swift of foot, we were soon well on our way.

Save that the country was better cultivated, it presented no very remarkable beauties ; but we passed some fine macaws in the trees—indeed, some of the smaller bushes were literally covered with these living jewels. Passing through the woods, the cooing of the doves, and the whistle of the *Cardinalis rubra* assimilated well with the distant murmur of the river, which they bounded to the extent of some miles. At length the crossing-place was reached ; Andreas hailed the canoe, and the boatman, taking me over first, seated me in a shady wood-house, in company with a calf and two kids. Looking between the cracks of the planks, almost sheer down into the river, I felt disappointed at its muddy and unpicturesque appearance at this point ; so inferior to the lovely Blanco. The banks plastered with mud and sedge, with here and there a few unhappy-looking reeds penetrating the ooze, in company with shreds of leather and rope (remnants of former crossings), gave me the idea of a river in ruins : Palenque in all its varia-

tions seemed to breathe nothing but mystery and desolation.

Our halt for the day was on the outskirts of a pretty little assemblage of houses, all built with very high conical thatched houses. We bivouacked under some magnificent trees, and Andreas fetched from a garden in the neighbourhood a supply of the most excellent water-melons I have ever seen. A few pence bought six of these, and the owner of the garden kindly sent a rock-melon in addition, for the especial delectation of the Señora.

We thoroughly enjoyed our lunch ; and as the grass and water were good, our animals also fed in comfort, although the halt here was necessarily a short one.

Our way was now through the real palm-forest of Honduras, lovely, tangled, uncultivated, damp, and picturesque.

All trace of path being lost, we mazed in and out where the ground was firmest, and free from the sprawling uncovered roots of trees, and the festoon of parasite plants which trailed from above, bidding fair sometimes to encircle us and lift us off our mules. Absalom here would not have required an oak-tree.

We had just passed through a piece of marshy land, and emerged more into the open, when we saw two mounted figures coming towards us, the one on a handsome mule, the other on a well-bred-looking mare. The rider of the latter was an elegant-looking man ; the other short and stout, but bearing what is called a good-natured-looking face.

Andreas exclaimed, "Here is Dr Pope, Señora—the short one ; the other is Don Jesús Gonsalez, the Justice of the Peace of San Pedro Sula."

I immediately urged on my

mule, and struck across the path in front of the riders. Bowing to the short man, I said, "I believe I have the honour of addressing

the Rev. Dr Pope. I am Maria Soltera. Have you received the telegram I sent you from Comayagua?"

CHAPTER XII.

The individual thus addressed hastened towards me, but it was plainly to be seen by his countenance that this meeting was the reverse of pleasant. Hastily rallying himself, he began to explain in a rapid tone that he had not replied to my telegram because he had hoped to reach Comayagua before I left it. He thought I would wait till I heard from him, and so forth.

I replied that I assumed he had left for Europe, and reminded him that in his last letter to me he had mentioned that this was probable, and that in consequence his agent would be left with full power to act in his stead.

"Oh yes, yes," replied Dr Pope; "but my departure for Europe is delayed. I have a great deal of law business to attend to—indeed I am going to Comayagua at this moment on a most important lawsuit, and cannot be back for a fortnight; in the meantime I have arranged with a lady at San Pedro Sula to receive you till I return."

"The delay is unfortunate," I answered; "but as I am nearly knocked up by much travelling and hardship, I shall be glad of a few days' idleness. Will you be good enough to give me the address of the house that I am to go to?"

The gentleman, turning round, addressed himself to the muleteer, speaking in remarkably good Castilian; then, continuing his conversation with me, he added—

"I am afraid you will find everything very rough, as I have not had time to order a mattress for

your bed; but you have in your journey been accustomed to sleep on bare boards," he added, in a jaunty tone, "and so you will not mind."

"I beg your pardon, sir," I replied; "I have been provided with my own hammock; and I take leave to say, that at the end of so long a journey, decent accommodation should be provided for me."

I spoke slowly, looking at him steadily; for by his later tone I felt that he could be very impertinent both with and without provocation.

"Doña Engracia will do all she can to make you comfortable, I am sure," he said apologetically; "but you must not expect English customs here."

To this I made no reply, but inquired how soon it would be before he returned to San Pedro Sula?

"It depends upon business," he replied. "I have also to attend a Synod to which the Bishop has summoned me; but I daresay I can get excused from being present at the meeting."

"Very strange, the Bishop did not mention this when I saw him at Comayagua," I answered.

"Have you seen the Bishop? Did you tell him you were coming here," he asked quickly, his face lighting up with a mingled expression of suspicion and interest.

"I paid my respects to his lordship, and I told him I was coming here. To my surprise the Bishop hardly spoke of you, and certainly he was quite ignorant of your

having arranged to bring me here," I replied.

"Well, this is not the place wherein we can carry on a conversation on the matter. I regret," continued he, "that I cannot turn back with you now. Kindly go to the house of Doña Engracia, and I will write you an explanatory letter from Comayagua, and send it by special messenger. Your neighbour will be Don Pedro Sturm, a Norwegian doctor, who has lived many years in San Pedro Sula; he will gladly be of service to you."

The Justice of the Peace, who had waited patiently during this conversation, now came up and made some polite observations, and then we took leave and went on our several ways. But still the thought ran through my mind,—What could induce him to invite me to San Pedro Sula?

Leaving the plantations, we splashed through a broad stream, and, after riding over the ruins of a part of the late Honduras railway, we at dusk entered into San Pedro Sula.

The environs of this town are far from unpleasing, and several respectable houses, erected mostly by German merchants, lent an air of stability to the town which could not fail to impress a stranger favourably. It was some little time before we found the house to which we had been directed; and when we did so, it seemed to me that the name of Doña Engracia did not command much respect. We made our way to a mean-looking dwelling, and at our summons a most unprepossessing woman made her appearance at the door.

"Are you Doña Engracia?" enquired Eduardo, looking aghast.

"Yes," replied the woman, who was bare-necked and bare-headed, and had her chin bound up with a

dirty rag; "and I suppose this is the lady I am to expect?"

"You are right," I answered. "Have you prepared any accommodation for me?"

"Enter, and see," was the reply.

I dismounted, and was ushered through an outer room furnished with shelves. Upon these were laid a few vegetables and some plantains. Opening another door with a flourish, an inner room was revealed, which contained two beds, one of which was furnished with bedding of some sort, whilst the other was perfectly bare, with the exception of a large bull's hide, which was laid over the bars of the bedstead as an under-covering. Not a vestige of matting, or of any other furniture, did this apartment contain. It was miserable in the extreme.

"Is this the room assigned to me?" I asked at length, my heart really sinking into my boots.

"Si, Señora, si, y conmigo" (Yes, lady, yes, and with me). The *conmigo* was drawled out with a flourish.

"This will not do for me," I answered. "I *will* have a room to myself, and shall go straight to the best inn; where is it?" And I turned to go out.

The muleteer, Andreas, who had been standing on the outer step, now spoke, and with some indignation in his tone. "This is no place for you, Señora; you had better come to Chicaramos. I know Chicaramos; you will be much better off there."

Eduardo was with the animals, and in high converse with a nice intelligent-looking lad, dressed in neat white raiment, wearing a Panama hat and a gay *pugaree*. "I am Don Pedro Sturm's servant—the doctor next door. He has sent me to show you the inn," the lad explained. "Permit me to

accompany you to the Posada Chicaramos."

I thanked the lad gratefully, and we were soon on the march again. "What an extraordinary name!" I said to the lad. "Is Chicaramos a village or a suburb?"

"No, Señora," he replied; "Chicaramos is a woman."

"A woman!"

"Yes, Señora. Her real name is Francisca Ramos; the contraction of Francisca is Chica, and so the name has all got run into one. She is called Chicaramos all over the country. She is a wonderful woman."

I was too exhausted to inquire in what might consist the wonders of Chicaramos, but contented myself by inwardly hoping that she might turn out to be an entirely different person from the one we had just left; and thus hoping, we rode up to the portal of the Posada Francisca Ramos, which was its polite designation.

The house was built in a square, the later and new addition being a *salon* and a billiard-room, which the owner had erected out of the money made by boarding and lodging the engineers and others concerned in building the Honduras railway. On this night this *salon* showed to the greatest advantage, as a ball was about to be held therein, and the long room was gay with light and flowers and brightly painted cane seats. It was for this reason that we were kept waiting a little at the half-opened door, although voices and exclamations were heard in all directions, and in all keys of the gamut.

Our guide proposed that we should go round to the other side, and enter the court-yard through the great gates, where we would most probably find some one to attend to us. This being done,

a *mozo* flew towards us, declaring that the hotel was full on account of the ball. The Señora could have refreshment, but not a room—all were engaged, &c., &c.

Never heeding this, we rode into the centre of the court-yard and dismounted. A handsome untidy-looking woman, dressed in a bright blue muslin dress, came up and looked at me, then turned away, and went into the house through a door on the right-hand side of the square.

"That is Chicaramos's daughter-in-law," said our new friend; "the wife of the *hijo mayor* (eldest son). They live on this side of the square, and their front door opens into the business street. She has gone to look for her husband."

Almost as he spoke a plain genteel-looking young man came out and advanced towards me. "My mother is busy," he said, "preparing for a ball, which is to take place here in an hour. The house is full, but if you will accept a bedroom in our part of it, it can be made ready at once. You will have to pass through our room, but you will not mind that."

This was the best thing I could do; and accommodation being found for the muleteer and Eduardo, our guide took his leave, saying that his master, Don Pedro Sturm, would call on me on the morrow.

After a slight supper, which I took at a round table, with the son's wife staring at me from the opposite side, I was making ready to go to rest, when the door opened, and a lady, in a yellow silk dress, black lace trimming, and rich gold ornaments, entered. As she closed one door, the son's wife rose quickly, and rushed out at the other.

It seemed probable that these two women were not *d'accord*.

Chicaramos—for it was she—came forward in a graceful man-

ner, and apologised for the negligent way in which I had been received, but expressed a hope that "*mi hijo mayor*" (my eldest son) had represented her properly.

She was a handsome woman; and from the manner in which she looked about, I saw that she managed well the affairs of her household. She then added that I might be kept awake by the music and the rattle of the billiard-balls, but to-morrow, being Sunday, would be a quiet day.

I was conducted to a room on the ground-floor, which was paved with red tiles, and was as mean as possible in its surroundings. However, it did contain some crockery ware, and this fact of itself announced Chicaramos to be a well-to-do woman. Two window apertures, filled by massive shutters, which served to keep the room dark and cool, rejoiced my sight, as the window-frames were so wide that plenty of air could always enter, and mosquitoes, *ad libitum*, at night.

A voluble young Creole woman had been sent to help me, and she was loud in her expressions of surprise that a gentlewoman should have come to San Pedro Sula to superintend the school.

"But the doctor is quite done up now," added this damsel; "and you have had a long journey for nothing."

"Why did he bring me, I wonder?" was the answer I made.

She could not say.

"Where does the agent, Mr Brady, live?" I inquired. "I wish to see him the first thing in the morning."

"He lives very near this," was the reply; "and I will go to him to-morrow morning."

"Thank you. Good night."

In spite of the drawbacks to repose enumerated by Chicaramos,

I did sleep, and that long and well; and it was late (for Honduras)—almost seven in the morning—when Eduardo knocked, and announced that Andreas must return at once to Potrerillos, and that he only waited to be paid.

This business was transacted through the window; and then I told Eduardo that I would pay him during the day, and that he must look at once for other employment, for I could not afford to keep a servant longer.

"I have thought over this, Señora," answered the lad; "and as the billiard-marker is going to leave in a day or two, I shall apply for the place. You see, by this I can be near you, and do many little things for you till you leave for Puerto Cortez and for England. This is not a place for you, Señora."

"But I have not money enough with me to get out of it," I answered; "and, Eduardo, though I like to have you near me, I would rather you were not a billiard-marker: it is not good for you. Cannot you get some other occupation?"

"Not at present. I have made inquiries, and I am told, Señora, that Chicaramos's service is the best in the place."

Everything about the premises was very quiet, the day being Sunday, and the inmates being tired also with the dance of the preceding evening. Some large patient oxen were looking out of their open stall at the lower end of the court; and some cocks and hens chased one another in various directions; whilst a number of pigeons flew to and fro, and settled on the roofs of the various out-houses which surrounded this enclosure. A large pepper-tree overshadowed the lower buildings, and an impudent *lora* (small parrot)

walked about and kept the whole in order. Altogether it was a pretty court for an inn.

The next sign of life was a rattling sound, and the voice of woman, neither soft nor low, calling upon the household, and *hijo mayor* especially, to arise. Soon the voice travelled in my direction, and my hostess looked through the aperture at me, pushing the shutter back on its hinges as she bade me "Good morning."

"I am glad to see you, Señora," I said. "I want to arrange to stay here a short time till my business is concluded. What am I to pay you for board and lodging—by the day, we had better say, as my affairs are uncertain?"

Señora Ramos reflected a moment, and then said: "My charges are 5s. a-day; but if you remain by the week they will be a *peso* (4s. 2d.) per day. I hope you will stay, as I hear the charge of the public school is to be offered to you."

"I have not heard of this, Señora."

"I daresay not, but the matter was discussed among a few last night after the dance was over. Don Pedro Sturm, the head doctor here, is one of the municipal council, and he will call upon you to-morrow. They all talk before me," continued Chicaramos, elevating her head, "as I am one of the principal people in the place."

I bowed at this, and told her that I did not feel justified in doing anything till I had come to an arrangement with Dr Pope.

"Oh, as to Pope," continued the Señora with the greatest contempt, "he can't do anything here. Ah, the money he owes me! And when I sent in my bill he threatened me with the law-courts. Ho, Vicente!" holloed the Señora to

a fat *mozo* who was slinking along the other side of the yard, "you have been too long in your bed. Chop up some wood, and tell Elenita to bring the Señora here a glass of milk."

Then she darted into my side of the house, and I heard her rattling up *mi hijo mayor* and his wife without the smallest ceremony, at the door of the room next to me.

A glass of milk was brought by the trim little girl called Elenita; and she told me that her grandmother bade her say that I had better dine in my own room always, as Señora Ramos never allowed meals to be taken in the *salon* under any circumstances. And she thought the English lady would not like to dine in the public room, over which her daughter-in-law presided.

I thought it well to close with this arrangement, and had subsequently reason to congratulate myself that I had done so.

Mr Brady called the next morning, and it was very much to his own surprise that I informed him that he was Dr Pope's agent. He was a good-natured-looking young man, with some means, I was informed; and it was between him and Dr Pedro Sturm that Dr Pope was now living.

An entry in my journal of August 2, 1881, runs as follows: "Don Pedro Sturm called, and we had a discussion about my taking the public school. Nothing, however, can be arranged about this until the Governor of Santa Barbara comes here, which may be in a month, or in two months, or next year. Everything seems to be a matter of *mañana*,—and salary, a very unknown quantity."

Don Jesús Gonsalez also came to see me on the same subject. This gentleman seems to have

influence with the governor, and expressed his intention of writing to that dignitary, and urging the matter. By the way, I got set down by Chicaramos for taking exception at the name of Jesús for an ordinary appellation (although it is pronounced "Hesooz").

"I thought you were superior to cant, Señora," flared up my hostess. "You northern people have your Christian; and pray, what is the name of Christina but little Christ? *Caramba!*"

I confessed that I had not sufficiently studied the meaning of Christian names, but stuck to it that Christian seemed less familiar than the other sound.

For some mornings I had observed several little children in the court-yard, and I inquired if these belonged to the house?

"Not exactly," Elenita answered; "but we take care of one or two. That little Felipe is a poor orphan, and grandmother has adopted him; that other is not a child of *matrimonio*, but the *pobiecita* (poor thing) cannot help that, and we promised the mother when she was dying to take care of her. Of course," continued the girl, "the father cannot come here, for the mother was our friend."

Ah! respectable, moral England, is it not too often the case with you, that the betrayed girl and her child are spurned to the dust, whilst the man goes free, and society opens her doors wide unto him, and even caresses him for the wrong he has done? I have often admired the kindness of the Hondureians to deserted children; most houses have one or two in charge, and the charity is given without ostentation and as a matter of course. These outcasts are received really as members of the family, and I have never heard of their entrance causing vexation or annoyance

to any of the other members of it.

Dr Otto, the latest imported medical practitioner in San Pedro Sula, also called upon me. He was a young man of strong opinions, and never evinced the slightest qualm in calling a spade a spade. He was a German, and spoke English remarkably well. Being of very "advanced" opinions, he seemed to have but one object, and that was to make money as fast as possible. Chicaramos was a patient of his; but she was a match for him, as, his fees being high, she raised the rent of his house accordingly, the doctor being her tenant. The humour with which the lady confided this piece of diplomacy to me was enough to make a cat laugh.

With such a character, my correspondent, of course, could not be let off; indeed the young gentleman said so much, that I at last asked him if he were not afraid to venture such and such observations. "Not a bit," was the reply; "and now, can you bear to hear an unpleasant truth?"

"Really, sir, I have had to bear so much lately that I think I can stand anything."

"Very well. Now, you wonder why Pope brought you here; I will tell you. He is played out; he thought if you came that he would get a footing in the school-house which would have been assigned for your use. This would give him a home; for the rest, he hoped you would bring a little money wherewith to set a plantation going; in fact you told him so in one of your letters."

"How do you know this?" I ask aghast.

"It is simply told. A young lad, whom I know something about, was sitting with the fellow when the runner brought your letter.

Pope was in an indiscreet mood, so he read a portion of the letter out, remarking, 'The lady has a little money, so I shall invite her to come.'

This was, as I found, the true explanation; and as Dr Pope had no house of his own, the Government refusing to assign him one after the first year, the idea of taking up his abode in the schoolhouse must have been a most convenient scheme. All was frustrated by the people rising *en masse* against him and demanding his expulsion.

That a colony was never more recklessly ruined, let all the officials, English, Spanish, and Hondureian, tell.

Don Jesús brought his wife to visit me, and a very sweet young woman I found her to be. She often sent preserved fruits and chocolate, and good Don Pedro Sturm sent in some light wine. These gifts were most acceptable, as Chicaramos's table was of the most coarse and meagre description, and the cooking was filthy. Many a day an egg and a cup of coffee was my only meal. My living could not have cost her more than fourpence a-day on the average; but it was in these ways that Chicaramos proved herself a wonderful woman. As Dr Otto often remarked, a mat, some raw plantains, and a stream of running water in the midst of the village, were all that was necessary to keep the inhabitants of San Pedro Sula alive. What could other people want with more?

The *alcalde* often came to see me in the evenings, and to him I owe some of the pleasantest hours I spent in San Pedro Sula. He was a Scotchman by birth, but had become quite a naturalised Spaniard, speaking the language well. He it was who was keeping the

key of the church, and this he handed over to the new priest one sunny morning, singing a psalm over the fact that this act completely ousted the late incumbent. "And now, my dear lady," said he, "a ball is to be given in a night or two to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Government of Honduras, and I am charged by the municipal committee with this letter of invitation to you."

So saying, Don Juan pulled out an elegantly written note of invitation, addressed to me as Señora Maria, the English stranger.

At first I felt inclined to refuse, but, on reflection, I saw that it would be ungracious to do so. The hand of friendship had been so cordially held out that it was with lighter heart that I selected evening raiment to wear—the first time for many weeks—wherein to appear at the ball, given, as usual, at Chicaramos's *salon*.

Whilst I was dressing, I thought I heard voices in dispute in the part of the house occupied by *hijo mayor*; a door was banged with more than ordinary force after a scuffle from within, then all was silent. It was some one, perhaps, who had forced himself in to see the preparations. Thus I dismissed the subject from my mind. I should hardly have noticed this, but I fancied I had previously heard footsteps approaching my apartment.

My toilet finished, I went into the *salon*, which was really very tastefully decorated and lighted. As nobody had come in, I drew a rocking-chair to the large entrance door, and sat watching the fire-flies as they powdered the grass opposite with their golden sparks. Brilliant lightning flashed in the far distance, which contrasted in fantastic guise with the gloom of an unusually still night, there being neither tingle of guitar nor rattle

of billiard-balls, and few people were moving about.

Presently my attention was attracted to a white object moving in a straight line towards the house. What it was it was impossible to discover—perhaps a visitor arriving in fancy dress! The figure crossed the grass and stood before me. It was the Rev. Dr Pope, hatless, wearing a man's night-shirt over his clothes, and *bola* (Spanish for intoxicated).

Surprise held me to my seat, and prudence chained my tongue. He glared at me, and opened his lips as if to speak; then he looked over my head into the *salon*, as if he were searching for some one, gave a lurch, turned on his heel, and was gone!

I rose, shut the door, and went through the *salon* into the *patio*. Eduardo was at a table washing some glasses; he anticipated my inquiry, for he said—

“Not now, Señora—I will come to you—the company has arrived.”

The door which I had shut in such haste was thrown open, and the company walked in by twos and threes, and then seated themselves round the room, the principal ladies occupying the rocking-chairs. Soon followed the music; the musicians—three in number—playing some selected piece, now entered, and they were listened to with marked silence to the end.

I could not help contrasting this politeness with the rude inattention which I have seen displayed in circles of far higher pretension during the execution of instrumental music by some amateur, or even professional performer. In both cases the music seems to be regarded solely as an aid to conversation, and the performer receives the tribute of silence only when the instrument ceases to vibrate.

The young men moved among

the ladies with well-bred ease, and when the *Lanza* was called every one stood up. The *Lanza*, I was told, is an old national dance, and it always stands first on the programme. The gentlemen select their partners, and those who do not join reseal themselves. In the old times referred to, the cavaliers carried short lances, and crossing these in some turns of the dance, the ladies passed beneath them.

The air of the dance is of itself very monotonous, the art of playing it consisting in strict emphasis on some few notes. The figure is not unlike the last—the fifth—in the set of our “Lancer Quadrilles.” There is a good deal of advancing and retiring in ring, and an in-and-out chain, in the mazes of which each one purposely loses his partner. A movement, which I do not pretend to describe, brings her back again, and the whole is wound up with the graceful waltz.

Yes; as it is danced by this people, it is graceful and even dignified. Strict attention is given to the execution of the step, and the time is often marked on the part of the gentleman by a sharp quick stamp on the floor. The figures of both waltzers undulate with the motion of the feet; indeed, the seriousness with which all is gone through, indicates that—in the mysteries of the dance at least—the Hondureians agree that what is worth doing at all is worth doing well.

The gentlemen dance quite as persistently as the ladies, and their manner in soliciting a partner is highly respectful always.

Between the dances, at intervals, refreshments were handed about; and these were upon a most limited scale, the whole consisting, generally, of a small

glass of liqueur, a larger one of water, and a few little fancy cakes. Outside, at the table in the *patio*, some of the gentlemen could be descried indulging liberally in bottled beer and other liquids. This expenditure, and the hire of the *salon*, was Chicaramos's harvest. Such a thing as a ball-supper had never been heard of in the whole of the Honduras.

Cigars and cigarillos really seemed to be the bread of life here, to judge by the numbers which were smoked by both sexes in that entertainment. During the interval allowed to the musicians they smoked too, and long before the ball was over the floor had become quite disgusting from the expectoration; and the smell of tobacco which pervaded the *salon* from end to end was enough to poison a whole province.

I remained no longer, and withdrew unperceived to my den. The lightning was playing in the distance, but it was of the harmless summer kind, and so I watched it between my half-opened shutters without fear, indeed with somewhat of interest. The contrast between the solemn night, with its flashing zigzag lightning—which resembled an array of scimitars, withheld only by the Great Captain's hand from leaping down and scattering destruction on the earth—and the dance and glare, and paltry talk close by, was sufficiently striking. A few moments later, and Eduardo stood beneath the window.

"That drunken man was Dr Pope," said I, in a tone which might be taken either as assertative or interrogative.

"Yes, Señora; he came into the other house. *Hijo mayor* did his best to persuade him to retire; but it was of no use. I came in behind

him, and not knowing who it was, I took him by the shoulders and put him into the street."

"He must have come round afterwards to the front door, where I was sitting," I said.

"That was it, Señora; I hear that he is afraid to see you, and keeps out of the way. He must have returned to enter the house, but he did not expect to meet with you."

"How do you know, Eduardo?"

"Chicaramos hears plenty of remarks from the people who come into the store, Señora; and so much news gets into the billiard-room."

"Well, when you have a spare moment, will you go to Dr Otto, and ask him to call upon me, as soon as it may be convenient, to-morrow? Be sure and ask Señora Ramos's leave before you go."

"Certainly, Señora; good night."

The lad went his way, and I remained at the open shutter watching the lightning and thinking. This, then, was no scandal, as to the man's personal habits: under any circumstances, it would be neither safe nor proper to hold any appointment under such a person; and it was evident that very little could be done with the Justice of the Peace, or the Governor of Santa Barbara either. The latter, I knew, had promised to come to San Pedro Sula to inspect matters generally, and to establish a public school, eight times in so many months, and had failed to put in an appearance up to the present time. The *alcalde* was very much my friend; but it had been hinted to me, more than once, that this functionary was only anxious to keep me in the place because I was an Englishwoman, with whom he, being part-

ly a Scotchman, found it pleasant to converse. Be this as it may, one thing was certain, Don Juan Jack, with all his goodwill, could not command either the Governor of Santa Barbara or the public funds of San Pedro Sula.

My best plan, therefore, was to leave as soon as possible; for though Chicaramos behaved well in the main, yet her *ménage* was so wretched that semi-starvation was what I was paying for at the rate of four shillings a-day. I was determined to consult Dr Otto, and then act as he should advise.

The doctor came early in the morning. Nothing could of course be said until the gentleman had gone through his usual objurgatory language against the Spaniards, the natives, the Governor, Don Juan Jack, and the inhabitants generally and severally;—Pope was a rascal; the Justice of the Peace was a dawdle; the Governor never kept his word; and Don Pedro Sturm was a fool. Chicaramos had the brains of the whole lot.

"Now, doctor, you know if any one else had declaimed against any one of these persons in the way you have done, you would be the very first to defend him. I do not like to hear a word against Don Pedro Sturm. He has been kind to me."

"Well, all right,—he is kind, certainly."

"I want your wisdom now to bear upon my affairs. I am certain it will not do to stay here; both time and money are being wasted, and I hear nothing can be done about the public school till the Governor of Santa Barbara arrives."

"Don't you rely on his coming; and the chances are if he does come—and I don't believe he will, for he is like all the rest of these

dawdling, offputting, gandering idiots——"

"Now, doctor, no abuse. I want to know if you think I had better write at once to Mr De Brot, the consul at Puerto Cortez, and ask him to arrange the necessary business for getting money from England to take me away. The truth is, I feel weaker, and I think I have a little fever on me now, and I dread being ill here."

"If you get ill you can't go; write to Mr Albany Fonblanque, the consul at New Orleans: that will be quicker. Mr De Brot is at his country place just now, on one of the islands, so there would be delay if you consult him. Fonblanque is a thorough man of business, and if you write and state the case plainly, he will give you the best attention. The Wanderer will sail from Puerto Cortez in three days, and your letter will be in time—that is to say, if that infernal 'Maquina' does not break down, or they forget the mail-bag, or devise some blunder which could only occur in these regions. Now, mind you write a short intelligible letter to Fonblanque, and to the point."

"Trust me. I think I will ask Mr Fonblanque to send it on to my lawyer in London," I replied.

"Yes, that is a sensible idea. Now, never mind more business, but look here,—Mopsey has come to see you."

As he spoke, the doctor lugged out of his capacious pocket a huge silk pocket-handkerchief, which was tied at the four corners in a loose knot. He opened this, and forth came Mopsey, the pet little parrot.

"You don't mean to say that you carry that bird about in this fashion?" I asked.

"Why, yes; you see he mopes

when I go out, and is utterly miserable, and so I shall carry him when I go my rounds. They are so gentle and lovable are these *loras*."

Certainly Mopsey was a true specimen of what Dr Otto said of the race. It was curious to see the little bird climbing up his shoulder and sitting on his head, and testifying her delight in many caressing ways; the doctor's fiery excited-looking face being at the same time smoothed into a somewhat benevolent mould, as he rendered up his finger as a perch for his pet and addressed her as "Du."

We chatted a little while, and I could not help wishing that this man, who was so brilliant and agreeable, could bestow a little of the goodwill which he testified towards the animal creation upon the human portion of it also. Some bitter wrong, or maybe, a long course of being misunderstood, (and what more hardening to the spirit than this?) must have turned a naturally good disposition into gall; and it was only by an occasional flash of sympathy, expressed as if he were ashamed of it, that I discovered that Dr Otto possessed one spark of human feeling.

One thing I had resolved upon, and that was, that some final understanding must be come to with Dr Pope, and that if I had an interview with him, it should take place in the presence of witnesses. I therefore wrote to Dr Sturm, in whose house he was staying, and also to the lawyer of San Pedro Sula, stating my intention of applying for my travelling expenses, and asking for a legal opinion upon the matter.

These two gentlemen called upon

me on the following day, and informed me that at first Dr Pope expressed himself willing to see me in their presence, but afterwards shirked doing so, and had requested them to apply to me for a copy of his letter in which he had so specially engaged me to come to San Pedro Sula.

I felt inclined to refer his reverence to his own copy of the letter written to me; but as it was important to see what he meant to do, I consented, and sent him a copy of his letters, adding that I retained duplicates of all my correspondence with him.

This last piece of information, I was told, considerably surprised him, and the next day I received a note from the lawyer, saying that Dr Pope did not look upon that letter as an agreement; but he proposed, if I would consent, that the matter should be referred to Mr De Brot, the consul at Puerto Cortez, for arbitration. I was strongly advised to accept these terms, the lawyer adding that Mr De Brot was an upright and most conscientious man.

"You have had quite expense enough," said this gentleman when I saw him the next day, "and I do not wish to hamper you with law,—the proposal came from Pope himself; it is no suggestion of mine, or of Don Pedro Sturm. I may add that if you see fit to accept this proposition, Dr Pope will undertake to pay your expenses to Puerto Cortez; you can then see the consul personally."

The dismay of this generous gentleman was indeed only overpowered by his disgust, when, on the following morning, he found that Dr Pope had stolen off on his mule during the night to Puerto Cortez, forgetting to leave the funds for my journey behind him.

This, however, was of little consequence, as I could despatch my letters to the consul by the train, and I would prefer going to the port when I could be sure that I was leaving the country. So I wrote my letters and waited patiently.

Little remains to be recorded of this weary stay at San Pedro Sula, and my journal at this period runs only that one day telleth another and one night certifieth another. A touch of fever; no news from the Governor of Santa Barbara about the school; a letter of promises and no results from one Government official or another; a pleasant chat with the *alcalde*,—and this was about the sum of my life for upwards of a month.

At length came a letter from Mr Fonblanque announcing that money had been placed in his hands, and that he would send a sum by the Wanderer steamer, which would sail in a few days from New Orleans to Puerto Cortez. Telegraph and steam and business-like lawyers in London had greatly facilitated matters, and I was free to depart at once.

As the Wanderer steamer only remained at Puerto Cortez twenty-four hours, and I was anxious to get away quickly, I found I must start without delay.

Dr Otto, who had gone down to the port on business, sent me a telegram, desiring me to start without an hour's delay, and I could catch the steamer for New Orleans.

As the train for Puerto Cortez did not run for two days, I was obliged to ride; and thus, from force of circumstances, I have traversed the province of Spanish Honduras from Amapala to Puerto Cortez on mule-back. Don Pedro Sturm got mules and a confidential man for me, and bidding adieu to Chi-

camos, I set off for Puerto Cortez.

Although the distance was under forty miles, the road was so abominably bad, and the detentions in consequence were so great, that it was literally impossible to reach the port before the Wanderer sailed.

It was at the ranche of General Z——, where I had halted for refreshment, that I was told this: "You cannot ride out at night," said the general. "Man as I am, I would not attempt to do so. The road is dangerous in daylight. I cannot allow you to pass my door; so pray, Señora, dismount and stay here till to-morrow. You can take time, and it will only be a detention of fourteen days before the Wanderer returns."

Accustomed as I had been to delay and disappointment, this was a bitter trial, and I could not refrain a burst of tears. Everything seemed to go against me. The general turned away to call his niece; her pleasant face acted like a cordial, and after a few moments I was able to say that I would take the advice so generously proffered.

"You surely must have been late in setting off," said General Z——; "under the best of circumstances you could only have reached Puerto Cortez an hour before the steamer sailed."

I handed him the telegram which Dr Otto had despatched.

"When did you get this?" he inquired.

"Late last night."

"You ought to have had it six hours earlier or more. This telegram has been delayed. Some fault in the telegraph office,—nobody knows, or will know, why; but it is very provoking."

It was indeed, but there was no

use in repining; and as I knew that there was a respectable house to go to, kept by Madame B——, in Puerto Cortez, I tried to make the best of the matter. My chief anxiety was about the money.

"The purser of the Wanderer has very probably left that in the charge of Mr De Brot for you," he said. "Nobody will wonder at your non-appearance—they are all up to the ways of the country. Go in and take some refreshment, and then I will escort you and Anita to the corral. I have some fine horses to show you."

I took leave of the general and his pretty niece in better spirits on the following morning, and as haste was not now necessary, I was more at liberty to admire the wild magnificent country, which extends to within a few miles of the port.

In addition, I bore with the greatest *sang froid* the total immersion of the baggage-mule in a swamp, and the delay and worry of getting her out again. This accident happened, fortunately, near a native village, and so assistance was easily obtained. Owing to the detention which this occasioned, it was late before we reached Madame's house.

This good lady was on the lookout for us, and her brother helped me from the saddle almost before the mule had come to a standstill. "We are not astonished at your being late," he said, "but all is arranged. Mr De Brot has got your money, and we will make you comfortable here till the Wanderer returns, and my sister's charges will be moderate."

How many, how very many simple kind people are there in Honduras!

Puerto Cortez is not much better than a sandy swamp, only waiting an opportunity to slip into the sea

and be lost for ever as a human dwelling-place. Its only sight is at the shed which forms the terminus of the railway communication between it and San Pedro Sula. There, piled up in rust and dust, are to be seen heaps of material imported to form the railway of Honduras. Bolts, tires, wheels, rails, chains, and various other of the material necessary to make a railway, are to be found piled up in profusion in this place; and the Hondureian points at it with a kind of grim delight as he tells you that thousands of pounds are rotting there.

Let us hope that this waste is only temporary. Late letters inform me that Dr Fritz Gartner and Mr Shears, American citizens, have entered into a contract with the Government of Honduras for the navigation of the Ulua river and its tributaries, the Venta and the Blanco. This accomplished, the reconstruction of the railway is sure to follow.

The *ménage* of Madame B—— was on a much more liberal scale than that of Chicaramos; and in consequence my strength partially returned to me, although I suffered fearfully from the sand-flies, which at Puerto Cortez are minute demons. Mr De Brot was also kind and attentive, but, as a matter of business, Dr Pope's name had been scarcely mentioned.

At length a missive, which ran as follows, was handed to me one hot morning:—

"I, John Frederic De Brot, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Puerto Cortez:—

"Whereas Miss Mary —— and the Rev. Dr W. L. Pope have consented to submit to my arbitration the question in dispute between them, about the unnecessary ex-

penses accrued to the former in a useless voyage to this country; and whereas I declared myself willing to accept the office of arbitrator in this matter, I have come to the following decision, based on the letters and other documents presented to me:—

"That the Rev. Dr Pope pay to Miss Mary — the half of the expenses she has incurred in her voyage to and from this country.

"Given under my hand and seal, this tenth day of October 1881.

(Signed) "J. F. DE BROT,
British Consul."

"You will never get a penny from Pope, I am sure," said Mr De Brot, when I called to thank him for this document. "Still, I think it will be a satisfaction to you to have your own statements thus, as it were, publicly substantiated; I only wish that you had insisted upon a legal agreement before you started, but in the face of such a letter as Pope's last one to you, I do not wonder at this idea not occurring to you."

"The matter at this point, Mr De Brot," I replied, "just resolves into this: nothing succeeds like success. Had this matter turned out fortunately, every one would have said, What an enterprising woman 'Soltera' is! so sensible to go abroad, where there is so much more opening for employment,—and all the rest of it. As it is, I am considerably out of pocket, and many of my friends, I feel sure, will be more ready to blame than to sympathise with me in the matter. However, the world on the whole is kind, and I shall be able to work the lost money back in some way; you know 'Voy con Dios' is my motto."

Mr De Brot asked if I had thought of putting the affair into

the law-courts of Honduras, in the case of Dr Pope's refusing to pay.

"Certainly not," I replied; "it would be a degradation not only to myself, but also to the respectable family to which I belong, to have my name dragged in conjunction with that of this adventurer through the law-courts of any country. Your decision establishes my claim and my honour; for the rest, I am content to let this unworthy man go his way." As I said this, the quaint old Italian proverb ran through my mind—"Evil does not always come to do hurt."

"I am glad to hear you say this," replied the consul; "but I boil with indignation when I think of this man. However, you are better off than many."

"May I ask if you have seen Dr Pope since he received his copy of the arbitration?"

"He came to my office last night, but he was in such a state that I refused to see him. Depend upon me, if I can get any money out of him for you, I will do so."

"I suppose," continued Mr De Brot, his handsome kind face lighting up with a smile, "after this experience you will never believe more in anything or anybody?"

"Not quite so bad as that," I replied: "has not the golden cord of others' kindness run like a string to hold me up through all my troubles? Believe me, I am not ungrateful, and I shall often think with pleasure of the people of Honduras."

My journal further runs, 14th October 1881:—

"Received a kind note from Mrs Barlee, asking me to spend a few hours at Government House at Belize, when the Wanderer should touch there on her way to New Orleans.

"The captain and some of the passengers of the ship *Cyprio* have just come in from Belize.

"*Saturday, 15th.*—A red-letter day, and quite a return to civilisation. Spent day on board the *Cyprio*, and played whist and the piano. Mrs Kindred, Mrs Brodie, Mrs Brockeley, Mr M'Culloch, and the chief officer, together with the captain. What people could be kinder or nicer?

"*Sunday, 16th.*—Called to say 'adieu' to good, kind Mr De Brot.

"*Monday, 17th.*—Sailed by the *Wanderer* for New Orleans. On the 19th arrived at Belize, and spent a delightful afternoon with Mr and Mrs Barlee. Their sympathy and kindness I will never forget.

"*October 24th.*—Arrived at New Orleans. Whether it is the reaction or the development of incipient illness, I know not, but here I must stay and rest. My strength is gone; there is neither fight, nor struggle, nor travel in me. Mr Albany Fonblanque has procured me quarters in the house of the lady where he himself re-

sides, and I hear Mrs Glenn is the best housekeeper and nurse in the world. Mr Fonblanque tells me that it is semi-starvation which ails me, and that the beautiful winter season of New Orleans will set me up."

So I made up my mind to remain and make my home for a time in the elegant comfortable house of Mrs Glenn.

A few weeks quite restored me. How could it be otherwise, with the surroundings I have described? Who can read the works of Albany Fonblanque without feeling certain that in his society, and in that of the friends he gathered round him, "*Soltera*" found enjoyment and rest?

From this delightful "winter city" I have come home, poorer (God help me!) but wiser and happy. The law of kindness has turned what was bitter into sweet. To this law I appeal, should "*Soltera*" be fortunate enough to find readers of her account of her ride across Spanish Honduras. *Vale.*

THE LATE BATTLES IN THE SOUDAN AND MODERN TACTICS.

IN describing the battle of the Alma, speaking of the slender red line of British infantry advancing to the attack, Kinglake says:—

“Along the whole line from east to west these files of two men each were strong in the exercise of their country’s great prerogative. They were in English array. They were fighting in line against column.”

Kinglake also quotes as follows a Russian general:—

“We were all astonished at the extraordinary firmness with which the red-jackets, having crossed the river, opened a heavy fire in line upon the redoubts. This was the most extraordinary thing to us, as we had never before seen troops fight in lines two deep, nor did we think it possible for men to be found with sufficient firmness of *morale* to be able to attack in this apparently weak formation our massive columns.”

According to the same historian, Sir Arthur Wellesley gave his reasons for leaving India after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens in the following words:—

“I observe that in Europe the French are fighting in column, and carrying everything before them, and I am sure that I ought to go home immediately, because I know that our men can fight in line.”

In the old Peninsular days, English battalions fighting in line two deep were accustomed to defeat columns of equal front and of six times their depth. At Albuera three British brigades advanced in line against the whole of the French 5th corps, formed in columns of attack, and utterly routed them. The repulse and ruin of the two attacking columns of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, and the overthrow at the Alma and at

Inkerman of dense Russian columns by British regiments in line, are only a few out of scores of instances that might be cited. The victory in all those battles was mainly due to the British infantry tactics in that particular. But with the invention of arms of precision, “the unconquerable red line that never yields” was voted an anachronism. After the Franco-German war, many military reformers ran wild after what was called “loose order.” And because the offensive tactics of the Germans, armed with their breech-loaders which they used skilfully and well, were invariably successful against the French, armed with the Chassepot of which they had not mastered the use, it was illogically concluded that breech-loading fire had increased the chances of the attack and diminished those of the defence in battle—a conclusion which all subsequent experience has disproved. Our officers were accordingly taught by the drill-book to believe, that by forming a battalion, practically, in four attenuated lines unprotected by skirmishers, in place of in the old closed line preceded and protected by “skirmishers,” it could advance over open ground with such immunity from loss, although the enemy’s fire was fourfold more powerful, that by a rush over the last 200 yards they would be able to capture the enemy’s position, though lined with rifles each capable of firing at least twelve shots while the assailants were passing over that last stage of distance.

This sort of teaching had its natural result in the disaster of Isandhlana, where the officer in command left his ground to ad-

vance in a thin skirmish line, with flanks unprotected, against savages outnumbering him by five to one. After this another change came over the spirit of our dream: an overweening confidence gave way to an excess of caution; and now British troops are not to be trusted in a closed line formation, either against a regular enemy or against savages. The battle of Ulundi was gained by *standing* in square to receive the Zulu attack; and since then it has not been considered safe for British troops, armed with breech-loaders, to attack a savage enemy, armed for the most part with spears and swords, and outnumbering the former by only two to one, except in cumbrous squares composed of many battalions.

There was good reason for the square formation at Ulundi. Our troops had advanced far into an enemy's country. A hostile population surrounded them on all sides. The scare of the Isandhlana massacre was strong and recent. Above all, the square did not attempt to manœuvre, but fought where it was formed with the greatest deliberation on commanding ground. Owing to the superiority of the British weapon, our victory was gained with trifling loss, although the Zulus had many firearms, and although they were strong, active, brave, and devoted.

The following comparison is certainly not favourable to our modern tactics.

At Meeanee, Sir Charles Napier met 25,000 Beloochee warriors, of whom 5000 were cavalry, with 15 guns. These men, armed with sword, shield, and matchlock, were Caucasians, inspired with a fanaticism and courage akin to those of the brave Soudanese blacks, who also resembled them in their mode of fighting, as shown by the fol-

lowing extract from the history of the battle:—

"The flank companies of the 22d were at first pushed forward to make the Beloochees show their position and numbers, for it is the habit of those savage warriors to ensconce themselves in holes and nullahs waiting the approach of the foe. They remain thus with matchlock resting on their cover, and do not fire until the mark is close; then throwing down the discharged weapon, they leap out with sword and shield, and strong and courageous must the man be who stands before them and lives."—*Conquest of Scinde.*

The British force numbered 2200 men all told, of whom 700 were cavalry, and *only* 800 (*the 22d Regiment*) *were Europeans. All were armed with the old "Brown Bess" musket.* Sir C. Napier, who had 12 guns, advanced to attack the enemy in echelon of battalion lines from one flank, the 22d leading. In that formation he utterly routed the Beloochees after three hours' hard fighting, killing and wounding 6000 of the enemy, and himself losing 20 officers and 250 of other ranks.

The causes of his success are not far to seek, and they are these—the general had confidence in his own skill, and every musket was brought to bear.

Here is a different picture. At the battle of Tamaai, 4500 British troops, *all Europeans, all armed with breech-loaders*, of whom 750 were mounted troops, with 12 guns and 6 machine guns, encountered 10,000 savages, a very small proportion of whom had firearms, the remainder swords and spears, and they had no artillery. Yet, with all these advantages, the British force was disposed in two cumbrous squares, the effect of which was to impede their mobility, and to reduce the front

of fire to one-fourth of what it might have been.

The square formation for attack is essentially vicious, and is a mere expression of conscious inferiority. To form your whole force in one large square, as at El Teb, is to put all your eggs into one basket. It was fortunate indeed that at Tamaai the eggs were in two baskets. When a square is pierced, though only in one place, the usual result is hopeless confusion and disaster. Not a man of the square can fire a shot against the enemy rampaging within, without running the risk of shooting a comrade; and it is in the highest degree creditable to the troops composing the broken square, as it would have been to the hardest of veterans in a like case, that they were able to rally so soon from the helpless and confused mass to which, for some doubtful minutes, they were reduced. Perhaps it may be argued that the "short service" soldiers who fought in the Soudan were too young to be trusted in a line formation as of old. But the young soldiers had given proof of their quality at El Teb, where the enemy, armed in large proportion with firearms, was more numerous, possessed artillery, and, above all, had not been previously beaten.

In the complimentary order issued after that battle, the General struck the true key-note in these words: "The result of the action has shown the British soldier that as long as he is steady, keeps his formation, and is cool in firing, the desperate rushes of brave blacks only ensure their destruction." Out of four officers killed in that battle, three belonged to the cavalry, the fourth was killed by bullet. Of the twenty-six of other ranks, seven were cavalry; of the remaining nineteen, nearly all were slain

by shells or bullets fired into the dense square. There is every reason for believing that, but for the unfortunate order to charge, the loss at Tamaai would have been less than at El Teb, since the enemy had no artillery and few firearms. In any case the experience of the first battle would have justified more enterprising tactics at Tamaai. If a square formation was imperative, it passes our comprehension why independent battalion squares, which can be formed in a few moments from column of march, were not employed,—a formation permitting perfect freedom of movement, and a rapid conversion to line for attack. If camels and baggage had to be protected, they would have been safe within the system of battalion squares from any but desultory attacks, easily dealt with by the baggage-guard; but at Tamaai the baggage was left behind in Zareeba, and did not hamper the troops at all. It appears that after order was restored in the broken square, both brigades advanced to the final attack in one long line, having the outer flanks protected by the flank companies being thrown back; and the line formation should, in our opinion, have been employed from the first—that is to say, battalion lines in echelon advancing either from the centre or from one flank, according to the ground. Such an arrangement would have brought every rifle into play; the flank of each line of the echelon would have been protected by the fire of that next in succession; the enemy would have been forced to make a long detour in order to turn the retired flank or flanks; and the flank battalions could have assumed square formation in a few seconds if necessary, which, in our opinion, it never could have become. If a "two deep" forma-

tion was judged too weak, the four-deep line formation might have been used. The 28th Regiment gained an honourable distinction by having, when armed only with the old "Brown Bess," faced about the rear rank when in line to meet a threatened charge of cavalry in both front and rear. And Sir Colin Campbell at Balaclava saved that place, which was the English base of operations, by forming the 93d Regiment armed with muzzle-loaders in a two-deep line to receive the charge of a large body of Russian cavalry. Surely then a four-deep line formation with the third and fourth lines faced about should be quite as effective as a square against the rush of any number of savages, however brave. It should be the aim of our generals to create an undoubting belief among their soldiers that their magnificent weapon makes them more than a match, if properly handled, for any number of enemies not possessing firearms. And we most earnestly protest against a system of tactics, humiliating to the army, which, disregarding our glorious national traditions, is certain if persisted in to destroy the confidence of the men in their weapon and in themselves, by huddling them up for the sake of safety in a cramped formation in which they can neither move nor fight with effect, and in which only one rifle out of four can fire to the front. In the late battles the guns were tied to the infantry, and their want of mobility was a serious disadvantage; but it afforded no good reason for the formation adopted, since guns are perfectly safe under the fire of the protecting infantry, however disposed. It is almost certain, however, that if one battery had been able to gallop off to a flank, its action would have ensured the

victory at a much less cost than was actually paid for it.

The origin of our recent tactical formations is to be found in the Boer "Lager." The word signifies a standing camp, fortified for the protection of troops against hordes of savages, either to prevent surprise at night during a halt, or more elaborately to withstand a formal siege. A moving "Lager" is a contradiction in terms. Nevertheless, at El Teb we saw an approach to it. That battle will be famous for the most remarkable manœuvre ever accomplished under fire. The British square, composed of six battalions infantry besides Royal Engineers and Naval Brigade, in approaching the enemy, found itself opposite to the right, the strongest flank of his intrenched position. The square being then wheeled bodily to the right, passed along the enemy's front under the fire of his rifles and Krupp guns, and finally reaching his left, dissolved into fighting formation, and rolled him up by an attack in flank. The execution of this manœuvre required the highest degree of discipline and steadiness. It is said that the Black Watch was composed of exceptionally young soldiers. If that was so, it is to be hoped, after their behaviour here and at Tamaai, that we shall hear no more of our men being too young to be trusted against such an enemy in the glorious old line formation for which the army was formerly renowned. The remark refers, however, only to battalions serving abroad, whose satisfactory composition is effected by the entire sacrifice of efficiency in the battalions serving at home, whose condition is a reproach both to the Government and to the country at large.

The statement that at El Teb the young soldiers of the Black

Watch fired too eagerly, leads to the subject of our rifle instruction generally. We believe we are expressing a very general feeling that too much attention is devoted to "long-range" shooting. There are probably not more than five men in every company capable of becoming marksmen by firing over the high long-range sights. Such men might be profitably employed as skirmishers; but the sort of shooting to win battles is that which will hit an enemy's line somewhere between the feet and the head, at a distance up to 400 yards; and all our men should be carefully trained in that view. For this purpose the correct elevation is everything—lateral deviation is of minor importance.

We are expressing also a very general feeling that our tactical instruction, especially relative to the tactics of attack, is in an unsatisfactory state. We believe that the true solution of the question will be found in the proper employment of "skirmishers." The first line of a battalion formed in the present order of attack consists of one-fourth the whole strength, and is called the firing line. The men composing it are not skirmishers in any sense. Skirmishers are troops who, not being intended for close combat, are employed to cover those who are so intended. They are independent of the attacking troops, whose front they cover, and may be at any number of paces' interval without deranging the attacking troops in their rear, behind whom they may rally after they have played their part. The object of employing skirmishers has been to oblige the enemy to show his hand, and to cover the advance of the line of battle in their rear by attracting the attention and fire of the enemy. And the rapid fire of breech-loaders

has immensely increased the value of "skirmishers," both in attracting the attention of the defenders and in veiling by its smoke the march of the line of battle behind them.

By our drill regulations "scouts" seem to be intended as a sort of substitute for "skirmishers," which, on the scale of 10 or 12 to cover a battalion front, they cannot be.

The German teaching—that *men once engaged can never be withdrawn*—does not apply to "skirmishers," but to the first fighting line of the attacking troops, respecting whom the saying is true.

During the Peninsular war, neither the French nor ourselves ever ventured to engage without covering the front of the attacking troops with skirmishers; and the argument in favour of that practice is greatly strengthened by the conditions of breech-loading fire.

It seems to follow, therefore, that troops destined to attack, whether formed in one closed line as of old, or in four open lines, should always be preceded by skirmishers in the old sense of the term. And this once established, we believe it would be found that the loss suffered by a closed line during its advance under fire would not be greater than that of a system, as now practised, of open lines backed by small columns of reserve. And the closed line would possess the immense advantage of preserving the different company and wing commands unmixed.

We have heard it asserted that the late fighting in the Soudan was the most desperate in which British troops have ever been engaged. There is always a tendency to magnify present events in comparison with those of the past, of which, in memory of the losses sustained at Badajos, St Se-

bastian, Albuera, Waterloo, Meeanee, and Inkerman, the assertion referred to is a remarkable instance. Of Albuera, the historian informs us that at the close of the battle only "1800 unwounded men, the remnant of 6000 unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill." And speaking of the failure of the 5th French corps to deploy, he says—

"The fire of the enemy's columns alone destroyed two-thirds of the British troops; the fire of their lines would have swept away all." With respect to Inkerman, Kinglake states that "out of a strength of only 7464 infantry collected on Mount Inkerman, with 200 cavalry and 38 guns, they lost in killed and wounded 2357, of whom 597 were killed!"

A RAMBLE TO THE RIVIERA.

INVALIDS, of course, cannot pick and choose the season for going southward for the winter. The doctor is peremptory, and the weather pressing. But we should counsel every one bound to the Riviera for mere change and enjoyment to defer the visit to the beginning of the Southern spring, and for the advice we can give two good reasons. Sufferings sweeten subsequent pleasure, and we need hardly enlarge on the horrors of an ordinary English winter, though this last one has happened to be exceptionally pleasant. When you have waited till you feel unspeakably miserable is the time to take a ticket for the south. We well remember the most delightful journey we ever made. It was in the depth of a wretchedly severe winter when we left Madrid to cross the bleak plains and the mountains of the Morena to the valley of the Guadalquivir. Madrid, as we need hardly say, is at once the coldest and hottest capital in Europe. In the winter it is no unusual thing for the sentries to be chilled to death by the winds from the Guadarama, in their boxes on the plateau before the palace. We left "La Corte" on a December

afternoon, in the old diligence days, when the railway had been only opened as far as the junction of Alcazar. We missed the correspondence of the Cordova diligence by a piece of carelessness, and consequently killed a day in the little *fonda* at Manzanares, fancifully associated with the knighting of Don Quixote. We dispensed with fuel or fires for the best of reasons: the plain is as treeless as a Tartar steppe, the only wood within sight being in the sails of the famous windmills. We supported nature on rusty bacon and haricot beans; we shivered through the night under our own railway rugs, in a chamber with glassless wind-traps by way of windows, closed by cracked shutters. We performed hasty ablutions at the pump in the classical courtyard. To cut the story short, when getting into the diligence at midnight we dovetailed our legs with those of our fellow-travellers for the formidable passage of the Sierra, we were chilled already through bones and marrow. Naturally, the temperature did not go up with the vehicle as we slowly ascended; yet it was a relief to get out and stretch the

legs in the slush and snow, as the mules, in a storm of oaths and stones, were dragging us up almost impracticable zigzags. In the cheerless hour before the dawn we should almost have welcomed a volley of bullets from a brigand ambush, on the chance of their awakening the dormant sensations; when suddenly we harnessed a fresh relay of a dozen or so of animals, and swept down the slopes at a break-neck gallop. As the atmosphere warmed up, and we emerged from our torpor, it seemed that we were passing from Purgatory to Paradise. Ere we well knew that we had left rocks and ice behind, we were in the vale of the sonorously sounding Guadalquivir. The morning sun was shining on us in a summer glow, lighting up the golden fruit that hung thickly in the foliage of the orange-groves. The sense of exquisite relief in these blessed gardens of the Hesperides seemed such a foretaste of heaven as Bunyan's travel-worn pilgrims enjoyed on the mountains of Beulah.

So it is, although in a less degree, when the traveller by the "Rapide" from Paris to Marseilles passes from the bare ploughlands of Northern France through the zone of the vines to that of the olive. We have been whirled past Dijon in the dark, beneath the *coteaux* of the world-renowned Burgundian growths, from the humbler Beaune to the Clos-vougeot and the Romanée. The grey glimmering dawn of late February has stolen upon us in the white dusts of the rolling plains somewhere in the neighbourhood of Valence. We left a city of umbrellas and thick pale-tots the night before; now we are in the country of shirt-sleeves and sunshades. Everything, from savage nature to the staring white-

washed buildings, reflects the frequent lustre of the unclouded car of the sun-god. For the rainy days are few and far between, though when the rain does come down, it falls in torrents. So what between the constant sun-blaze and the rare rain-storms, the very stones and rocks are crumbling into powder. The straggling flocks of shaggy sheep pick up a precarious subsistence on the coarse herbage and the fragrant tufts of the wild thyme. The shepherds, shrivelled and wasted away in the protracted droughts, stalk about in their sad-coloured cloaks and leg-swathings. The inhabitants live in flat-roofed white houses, which are either huddled together in townlets or hamlets, or scattered about the wide Campagna. In spite of the brightness of the bloom of occasional orchards of almond-trees, a more dreary place of residence all the year round it would be difficult to conceive: yet the wakening time in the February morning is delightful. The fresh but balmy air breathes through the open windows, into a carriage that has probably been poisoned all the night by the fumes of vile tobacco. And in the first promise of the genial warmth towards which we are hastening, we forget the hardships the inhabitants must undergo through the dog-days — and after all, we may be glad to remember, they are used to them.

The charm of the sharp transition from detestable to delightful weather is the first of the arguments for delaying a journey to the South. The second and more prosaic reason is the comparative comfort of the railway trip undertaken "out of the season." Invalids are generally ordered to the South somewhere about the middle of November, and we suppose there

is no help for it. Yet it often strikes us as a serious question, whether the game is worth the candle, especially when the candle is flickering low. A robust man might very well shrink from the horrors of that long and scrambling journey. The Northern Railway of France seems to have been affected by contact with our own South-Eastern. Its Direction is just as grasping, and very nearly as tyrannical: it supplies first-class carriages that are scarcely superior; and moreover, it packs the passengers like sardines, while forgetting the mollifying oil of civility. Nor are things much better on the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line, although there the carriages are infinitely more capacious. Each compartment is seated for eight; and each side is divided by an elbow in the middle. So that you put into a lottery, in which there are rarely prizes, but in which unhappily there are seldom blanks. You are pretty sure to have a fellow-passenger in your corner, and the only question is as to his bulk. Now, in a long experience of foreign travel, we have come to the conclusion that the better class of French people, though short of stature, are the bulkiest of European races. The peasantry, the *ouvriers*, and consequently the rank and file of the army, run light and small; but the capitalists, the wealthy *bourgeoisie* and their womankind, who must take first-class tickets when they travel by express trains, are almost invariably gross of habit. There are wiry generals, and slim colonels of cavalry; occasionally you may meet a veteran *roué* who has run to seed, or a journalist-politician whose fiery soul has been fretting away the flimsy sheath. But show us a man who has made his money by industry or commerce—in met-

als, cottons, silks, or *épicerie*—and we will show you a *gros monsieur*. It is not for nothing that a well-to-do gentleman breakfasts and dines every day with *hors d'œuvres*, a couple of heavy *entrées*, a chicken, salad, and an *entremet*, never doing a yard of pedestrian exercise when he can avoid it. And these *gros messieurs*, if we may be forgiven the expression, are the very *diable* as common companions on a long railway journey. They are sure to be sumptuously clad in the heaviest wrappings; they have a purse-proud swagger that communicates itself to the knees and elbows; and they are aggressively selfish in their self-indulgence. Yet were it not for that swagger, notwithstanding their bulk, we might support these gentlemen with acquiescence if not with resignation. For nowhere in Europe, not even on the cosmopolitan lines of the Danubian principalities, do you meet so low a type of men travelling with first-class tickets. The French *commis voyageur* is often bad enough, yet he is a prince and *grand seigneur* in manners and deportment compared to the shadier patrons of the tables at Monte Carlo. We neither care nor dare to go into details: we have no liking for Rembrandt-like analysis of moral and social perversities. We only say that we would as soon hand any ladies of our party into the monkey-cage at the "Zoological" as into a compartment half choked with these fifth-rate *chevaliers d'industrie*, more especially when they chance to have females in their company.

In the height of the season you must charter a sleeping-car, unless you choose to trust your sleep to Providence. In early spring you may rectify the official arrangements by a judicious distribution of tips, and may even secure a

corner in a *coupé* at the regular tariff. Then you wake up among these venerable cities of the South, in a frame of mind predisposed to enjoyment. Running parallel to the swift course of the Rhone, what a picturesque panorama unrolls itself, and how pregnant with historical associations! Not a town that has not been intimately connected with wars and battles and sieges, from the earliest struggles of barbarism with civilisation. Here Hannibal crossed the Rhone with trampling and trumpeting elephants shrinking back from the water; there the legions of Rome were brought to bay by hordes of savages: there the exiled Popes held their courts; or some anti-Pope, exchanging the tiara for the casque, defended his beleaguered fortress, foot by foot, till he finally escaped by subterranean passages. Seigneur fought seigneur through the middle ages. Swiss, German, and Italian mercenaries—the “Shearers” and the “Flayers”—were called in to assist in devastating the country; and the wars of religion, that spared neither age nor sex nor church images, were succeeded by the more remorseless victories of the Revolution. The “Red Terrors” were followed by the “White,” and the sand-banks of the Rhone were covered with corpses, cast into the stream, and flung back by its currents.

If we study the scenery, we have the clue to the atrocities that aggravated those ferocious civil wars. There is no shelter anywhere, and no shade. Everything is parched and burned through the interminable summer, and blighted by the mistral for the rest of the year. The blood of a population, largely mixed with that of Saracens and Moors, is kept perpetually at the boiling-point. In times of licence and excess, when they

have laid the wine-shops under contribution, and started the casks always stored along the quays, they lose self-control altogether. A popular cry acting on the fiery spirit of faction—and factions are the hereditary tradition of the country—sets the mad mob in a flame that is only to be extinguished in blood. Besides that, we recall all the horrors of the papal torture-chambers, or the cold-blooded massacres of prisoners by Protestant fanatics like Des Adrets, or the tragedy of the Glacière at Avignon, or the cowardly assassination of a Maréchal Brune. There is no shelter and no shade, but consequently there is all the charm of novelty. It is a most exhilarating change from the English woods and trees, which, though leafless, will still condense the fogs, veiling the reeking landscapes in a continual water-drip, to this pure still air and that cloudless sky; to those arid plains that seem strewed with white tooth-powder, where you expect to see the mirage of the African deserts—really a frequent phenomenon in the Camargue and on the Crau. Though when we talk of calm air and sunny skies, we may add that you must by no means absolutely reckon upon these. Somewhere to the south of Valence, the mistral begins to blow, with which you are sure to make more intimate acquaintance later on along the Riviera. And the mistral at its worst is a diabolical refinement upon the most malignant of our English east winds. When it blows, the heavens are covered with a dismal grey pall, the earth is enveloped in the clouds of penetrating dust that chokes the lungs and checks respiration; while you feel as if the blood were being infiltrated with some irritating poison, and each separate and

sensitive fibre were being rubbed down with fine emery - paper. After exposure to a course of the mistral, the most sanguinary criminal might safely plead extenuating circumstances before any jury drawn from those communes of the South.

The vast plain to the south of Arles, covered with pebbles and boulders, and strewed thick with dust, is called the Crau—the stone—and the word seems singularly expressive of its physical characteristics. A still wilder district is the swampy solitude of the Camargue, in the triangular delta between the branches of the Rhone. We suspect that very few Englishmen have visited it. There is no decent accommodation to be found anywhere; and quartering one's self in the reed-thatched hovels of the herdsman, would be almost tantamount to a sentence of death. Great part of it, through great part of the year, is as pestilential as anything in the Pontine Marshes. Embanked on all sides against the inundations of the Rhone, the sleeping waters stagnate in ditches and lagoons, and are only drained by excessive evaporation. Night and morning the reeds and rush-beds are sure to be enveloped in a dense steam of poisonous vapours. The few inhabitants pine and die; but the malaria appears to suit the constitutions of the animals that fatten through the summer in the rank herbage. In place of the Pontine buffaloes, you have herds of wild cattle—plunging in mud-baths up to the eyes through the summer heat,—and there are troops of wilder horses ranging at will, said to be sprung from an Arab stock; and there are sheep, of course. But what lends a romance even to the sense of the neighbourhood of the Camargue, is the fact that it is really a piece

of Africa, which has fallen by some mistake into Europe. The Marshes might remind one of those near Lake Menzaleh, and the ornithology is even more African than the semi-tropical vegetation. You come across flocks of the ibis, the pelican, and the flamingo; and the only sounds that break upon the evening stillness, besides the bleating of the flocks and the bellowing of the herds, are the flapping of the wings of the waders rising heavily from the pools, or the screams of the sea-gulls that fly inland for the fishing. It is very literally a dead-alive place; but then it seems a wilderness where human beings have no business. With its ghostly stillness, and ghastly lights and shadows—with the silent forms of phantom-like fowls floating between the reed-beds and the low horizon—it looks as if it ought to be a purgatory or quarantine-ground for the spirits of smugglers from the neighbouring sea-coast.

But to the southward and the west of it, we come upon a city which might pass for the capital of this country of the departed. It is safe to say that no town in the world is more expressively and emphatically named than Aigues Mortes. Decaying in a shadowy immortality of associations, it has been slowly dying for centuries. A population of over 10,000 has shrunk to about a fifth of the number, and the mystery is how the survivors do manage to survive. They have no chemist's shops, and they appear to know nothing of the virtues of quinine. Even in the middle ages, when small consideration was shown to poor folks, and they were used up prematurely as a matter of course, Aigues Mortes was excepted from imports on account of the deadly malaria. The sea is supposed to

have receded from it in prehistoric times, and communications have since been painfully kept open by a canal, which was renewed by Louis XV. Yet a remnant of the people have always struggled on, living or dying by fishing off the shore, and by importing fruits from Northern Africa and the Balearic Isles. Aigues Mortes has its history and its memories: a great king found his death there, as was only natural; and it has stood more than one siege in its time. In fact we should be inclined to pronounce it impregnable; and the girdle of fortifications which still encloses it, with the moat which the municipality has wisely drained, must have been but the feeblere second line of defences. Its real protection was the mortal pestilence, which must have beat up the lines of the besiegers every night, as the sword of the angel of the Lord came down on the hosts of the Assyrians. The fortifications have been spared, because the city, as we said, has been shrinking to a fifth of its former size; and as four-fifths of the houses have been roofless and unoccupied, builders have always had a superabundance of stones. But the survival of Aigues Mortes is a singular example of the extraordinary tenacity of municipal life, and the intense vitality of local patriotism.

Pleasure-seekers travelling towards the South ought to take the journey leisurely, and be ready to change their plans, or diverge on the temptation of an impulse. But we shall never reach the Riviera at this rate; and yet we have a reasonable excuse for asking our readers to linger. According to the ideas we have expressed, one of the secrets of enjoyment is the resolution that resigns itself to previous wretchedness. And how, in that view of

things, can we better prepare for the light and lustre of the Riviera than by depressing ourselves in the deserts of the Crau, or in the brooding miasmas of the Camargue? While, if we wished to enter heartily into the joyous life and bustle of Marseilles, we should vegetate for twenty-four hours previously in the mortal stagnation of Aigues Mortes. It is difficult to imagine a stronger contrast, for Marseilles is perhaps the brightest seaport in the world. There is the strangest mingling there of trade and gaiety, of the gravest business with the most garish luxury; and of all the maritime races of the world—Eastern and Western. Nevertheless, after our delays upon the Rhone, we dismiss the temptation to loiter on the Quais or the Cannelière, for it is high time we made our start along the Corniche. Yet as we are preparing to step into the train for Toulon, one recollection plucks us back in spite of ourselves. For the famous Corniche really begins at Marseilles, behind the harbour and the ports—the “Chemin de Corniche” being the favourite drive of the Marseilles citizens of a Sunday. Truly no city in the world—Constantinople, Naples, or Palermo not excepted—can boast of a more grandly beautiful promenade: rocks to the left; mountains in the middle distance; rocky islands crowned with castles to seaward on the right; with a succession of sheltered bays and rugged promontories—each turn disclosing some new and enchanting surprise; while the country houses cling to crevices in the cliffs, in their settings of orange-groves and gay flower-gardens; and the blooming creepers of Africa have been everywhere acclimatised where hard labour can find them a footing of

soil. Above are the azure skies; far beneath is the limpid sea. It is a delightful drive for once in a way; it is an odd medley of suburbs, with what should be savage solitudes; and the picturesque strip of coast has been coquettishly Cockneyfied. From under the dusty bare trellising of a drinking-booth, you look out on the barren mountains and the broad expanse of the sea; while a creek that might contain rock-baths and a tiring-cave for the sea-nymphs or the Sirens, has been turned into a popular "oyster reserve," and has christened itself the "Renommée de Bouillabaisse." This spring, when we walked along that road, it chanced to be the last day of the Carnival; and the sight was one to be long remembered. All Marseilles appeared to have flocked out. For two miles at least, along the winding ledges of the Cornice, and as many more along the broad Boulevard of the Prado, which leads inland at right angles and back again to the town, was one dense mass of closely packed vehicles and human beings. Specimens of all ranks were to be seen on wheels, from the wives and daughters of wealthy merchants, in their well-appointed equipages, to clamorous females in the overcrowded carts of costermongers, charcoal-vendors, and fishermen. There was every style of costume, from Parisian toilets to the glaring cottons and the turbans of Barcelona handkerchiefs, knotted carelessly round shaggy and swarthy locks. The mob was good-humoured, though very noisy; and if there was any drunkenness, it was chiefly among the foreign mariners, who might have represented each port from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Setting the crowding altogether aside, the

dust, the tobacco, and the garlic rather spoiled one's pleasure. Yet there was everything there for the artist to revel in, from the grand in nature to the grotesque in humanity, with the exception of the presence of feminine beauty. We are told that the colonists of the Catalan village immortalised by Dumas in his 'Monte Christo' have died out; and we can well believe it, for we saw nothing that suggested the charms of a Mercedes. The pronounced features of the younger women are rather gruesome than simply irregular; the sallow complexions could only be called clear-olive by charitable poetical licence. As to the figures, they are full to a fault even in early youth; and any passing attraction of the *beauté du diable* has almost invariably vanished with advancing years.

And if the charms of those sun-browned Southern beauties are very much of a myth, our romantic ideal of the county of Provence is in great measure a delusion. The very name sounds sweet and suggestive of softest landscapes. We are inclined to associate the country of the musical King Rene and the land of the Troubadours with a rich and sensuous vegetation, as well as with song and sunshine. Theatrical decorations and historical novelists, from the author of 'Waverley' downwards, have led us to look for something like the Concho d'Oro of Palermo, or the rose-gardens of Damascus; we half expect to see peasants following the plough, with lutes slung by crimson ribbons to their shoulders, and to meet village maidens in short silken petticoats, with "hands that offer early flowers" to the visitors. In point of fact, Provence over the greater part of its surface is one of the most sterile districts on the face of the earth:

the barren hills seldom show a strip of forest, and the rocky valleys with their dry water-courses are the very abomination of desolation. But then, on the other hand, there are nooks in these mountains, there are sheltered plains and stretches along the sea-shore, which sun themselves in an almost unapproachable climate, and show marvels of varied fertility. There fruit-trees, transplanted from far to the South, bud and blossom and bear in luxuriant profusion; and under the shadows cast by their boughs all kinds of vegetables flourish in a quick succession of crops. Considering the home consumption, one might be startled by the figures of the fruit and vegetable exports from the various seaports from Marseilles to Nice; the truth being, that it is less a question of soil than of protection from the winds and of irrigation. If you can guard the gardens and farms from the nipping north winds, you may plant almost anything with absolute confidence. If you can only lead water over the friable dust, as in the desert of the Crau, or the kitchen-gardens near Cairo, each bank and border becomes a natural forcing-bed. So much to explain the far-renowned fertility of Provence; and then that barrenness gives a strange charm to the coast-scenery. After leaving Marseilles station, we strike inland across a broad plain, which, though tame in itself, is skirted by mountains. And these magnificent chains of mountains everywhere form a background which frames a series of rich and warmly coloured coast-pictures. On the coast there is the necessary shelter. On the coast we come upon a succession of nooks and tiny bays, where soil washed down from above has been gathering from time immemorial.

The materials for a profuse return on labour are always ready, and indefatigable industry has done the rest. Baskets of manure are annually carried up on the backs of donkeys or the heads of women. The soil has been saved from the floods by being built up in successions of terraces; and those terrace-walls are repaired with the stones which are being perpetually hurled down by storms from the hilltops. The consequence is, that what would otherwise—in grey weather at least—be a somewhat grim landscape, is continually being lighted up and relieved by that gardening in many colours; while where the ground—thanks to its exposure or its impracticable character—will hardly repay cultivation of any kind, the steeps along the shore are often clothed with picturesque pine-woods, with a tangled undergrowth of fragrant and flowering shrubs.

But, of course, the never-failing and ever-changing enchantments of the Cornice are in the sea, which washes the coast and the cliffs. There is one point of view on the Riviera di Levante, between Genoa and Spezia, which to our mind far surpasses any other; but, on the whole, the Riviera di Ponente is unquestionably the more characteristically diversified and the more beautiful. The pity of it, from the poetical point of view, is the presence of the very serviceable railway, which has run the old *vet-turini* and the post-carriages off the road. By the railway we pass from pleasures to disappointments, the latter decidedly predominating. Just as we prepare for some delicious surprise, we are perpetually being swallowed up in the darkness; or the cup of pleasure we are draining is dashed from the lips by the severity of the pace and some curve in the gradients. The

only way to do the Cornice satisfactorily is in a carriage, or by stopping at a succession of little towns, so as to enjoy the drives or walks in the neighbourhood. Following the road in the good old-fashioned carriage, one is surprised into a sense of gratitude to the genius of Napoleon. The faults of the conqueror are half condoned; for the carnage he caused chiefly affected his contemporaries, and the good works he promoted have survived him, for the benefit of all generations. What a traveller he was! What a patron of engineering enterprise! For the little corporal of artillery was as much of a practical-engineer as a strategist. From France to Italy, across Alps and Apennines, through the gorges of Swiss mountains and South German hills, his marches are everywhere commemorated by the roads he has left behind; and the amount of sin and suffering which their smooth surface and easy gradients have spared overwrought animals and their drivers, should surely be some compensation for the horrors of an Austerlitz or a Waterloo. This particular stretch of Cornice is one of his masterpieces; and the æstheticism of its construction is far more artistically exquisite than that of the school of historic painters who celebrated his countless triumphs. Carried between cliffs more or less perpendicular and the sea, it rises and falls with each accident of the rugged coast-line, turning the spurs and ravines with insinuating but indomitable persistence. Now and then, though not very often, it is actually down upon the level of some land-locked little bay, where the silence in ordinary times is so intense, that you may hear the gentle lapping of the tideless sea against the shingle. Far more frequently it is led along a lofty ledge, that in itself is very

literally a cornice,—a mere notch cut out of the steep hillside, with hanging red blocks and boulders above, that seem to be held up by the twisted fir-roots; while below is the abrupt bank that is crumbling away into the waves at the bottom. But the most picturesque points are where some sharp turn of the road is actually hanging on a shelf over the sea. Then leaning out of the carriage, looking over the low parapet of masonry, you see the clear blues or greens of the water, at a sheer depth of several hundred feet, flecked here and there with a tinge of white, when the surface is rippled by the crest of a reef. Possibly, by way of giving life to the little scene, there may be a fisherman's hut or two; and a boat drawn up on the shingle, changed to a child's toy in the distance, notwithstanding the clearness of the air—and some floating lobster-pots—with a vine or two trained over a rude verandah. While lifting the eyes upwards again, and gazing out to sea, headland behind headland is running out before you, and the solitude of blue water is possibly relieved by the picturesque outlines of a grey group of rocky islands.

No wonder that invalids go to the Riviera in search of health, while shivering mortals worried by the blue-devils, seek it for the sake of mere light and warmth. Doctors, however much they may differ as to the various health-resorts, play safe cards in recommending the Riviera in general. It has its drawbacks, no doubt. We have said already that its winds are often detestable; but that is only stating the truth in other terms, that an Eden is nowhere to be found on earth. Take it all in all, we may safely predict that it will go on growing in favour and fashion, although particular places

may rise and fall. It has the great advantage of being exceptionally accessible, and there is no climate so reliable in the Italian latitudes anywhere to the north of Palermo. The journey to southern Spain, whether by sea or land, or to Algiers, or to Egypt, is a serious business; and thanks to the popularity of the Riviera, there is already a superfluity of physicians, and chemists, and English grocers, and first-class hotels. The British house-agent, banker, and general utility man, has become an institution everywhere from Hyères to San Remo; and though he may charge a handsome commission for his services, his services may be of inestimable value. But in one matter, and that the most important, the house-agent is as unreliable as the local doctor. The difficulty is to obtain trustworthy information as to the relative recommendations of the various resorts. The most eminent of these local doctors, if he has not actually made the reputation of his place of residence, has at all events written a standard work on the subject. In his book he demonstrates, beyond possibility of dispute, that, barring an accident or gross inattention to his instructions, there is no reasonable possibility of dying there. He proves it by statistics, which he manipulates with skill, and he suppresses each fact which tells against his system. It is charitable to hope that he is the victim of his own sophistry; but since he argues from prepossessions rather than principles, the advice he gives is greatly to be distrusted. And even when you have come to a conclusion as to a place of sojourn, the question arises as to local situation; and, considering the danger from treacherous winds, that question is more important than the

other. There the doctor is more to be relied upon than the house-agent, for it is naturally the agent's interest to recommend the fashionable quarters where the rents are highest. It should be remembered, too, that wintering on the Riviera is, generally speaking, extremely expensive, and visitors must regulate their plans by their purses.

As it happens, the first of the resting-places they reach is one of the cheapest, while its climate is said to leave little to desire by those with weak chests or delicate lungs. Hyères boasts of a beneficent climate, but it must be almost as dull as Aigues Mortes; though at the one you look out over lagoons and malarious saline swamps, and at the other, from the walks with which the *enceinte* has been embellished, you gaze at the distant sea over the billowy foliage of the orange-trees. But the sea is distant—no less than three miles away; the days drag slowly along; and there is little in the shape of the quietest society to lighten the long evenings. It strikes us that to enjoy a place of the kind, one should be fagged from the overstrain of excessive mental exertion. We can conceive it being a refreshing though rather enervating place for the statesman driven from power by hostile majorities; for the politician who has lost the confidence of capricious constituents; or for the author who has been spinning the fine cobwebs of fancy from his brain, till he has temporarily exhausted his raw materials. In cases of the kind, you draw life from death; and you feel that the springs are filling while there is no perceptible flow on the surface. But the victim of chest-complaints or consumption, always thrown back upon himself, morbidly self-indul-

gent in the analysis of distressing symptoms, needs a little judicious rousing. If there be any lingering hope of a cure, the first object should surely be to divert his mind. And how can the mind be distracted in sojourns of which Hyères is the type? A glance at the costumes, which have no very special characteristics; a stroll through the markets, with their fruits and odd fishes; a look round on the landscape from the elevated promenades; a generally agreeable sense of the genial warmth,—and you have pretty well exhausted the impressions of the town.

So much for one extreme of winter-life in the Riviera: we find its opposite at Cannes or Nice. Hyères may be defined as hygienic, while Cannes and Nice are fashionable; and nowadays, in Nice we have really a city. When the farce of the false plebiscite was played which annexed it to France, sorely against the real feelings of its inhabitants, it contained 23,000 souls. At present the population has risen to between 60,000 and 70,000, nor does that include the fluctuating hordes of Italian labourers, nor the visitors of the upper ranks, who average from 6000 to 10,000. That its growth is partly owing to the annexation there can be no reasonable doubt; but it is chiefly due to the completion of the Cornice Railway. In the meantime, we should be inclined to think that the expansion must have reached its limits, though the speculative builder is still abroad and busy. No European town has been so much changed in our memory, which carries us back for a quarter of a century. Nice must always have seemed handsome and showy from the sea front, since the magnificent Promenade des Anglais was constructed by the benevolence

of our country people, when the Niçois were nearly starving during the winter of 1822. But now it is become a Paris in miniature—a Paris under a southern sky. Though land in the best situations has been selling lately at no less than 500 francs per *mètre*,—it has fallen lately, we believe, by about one half,—the broad and airy streets in the new town are a strange contrast to the tortuous lanes in the old. Nothing on the banks of the Seine is handsomer in their way than the new Boulevards of Bouffa and Longchamps. An imposing line of grand hotels has altogether eclipsed the old-established houses, with their excellent cookery and their musty accommodation. Restaurants have obtained such local renown, that the hotels impose a heavy penalty upon dining out of doors; while the proprietary clubs that pride themselves on their *chefs*, flourish and pay their way by the practice of *baccarat*. The monthly subscription of sixty francs seems but a bagatelle, when you consider the possibilities of loss and gain in an establishment where you can be comfortably ruined in a fortnight. As for the singularly attractive shops, they suggest the strange blending of the population. The greater gravity of Italian art tones down French coquetry and frivolity in the graceful arrangement of counters and windows. And the local industries literally lend themselves to sweetness and light; for the surrounding *campagna* is fragrant with fruits and flowers, as the staple manufactures are of sweetmeats and confectionary. The wholesale exports of oranges and lemons, of grapes and almonds, rise to very considerable figures; the wharves are redolent of oranges; as, after the Carnivals and the Battles of

Flowers, the streets are scented for days with the odours of castaway violet bouquets. As the ancient mariner, according to Rogers, knew when he was approaching Pæstum, in the Tyrrhene Sea, by the fragrance that was wafted off the shore from its rose-gardens, so the pilot, groping for Nice harbour in the dark, might be guided by the effluvia from decaying oranges. And as for the confectionary-shops, we can only say that their seductions carry us back to the days of our boyhood. Cakes, creams, and chocolates are so irresistibly tempting, that you sternly resolve to breakfast on simple coffee, and go in for a pastry-cook's lunch, leaving the consequences to Providence. Then Nice is gay with the society of a fashionable city, and there is no difficulty in indulging cheaply in its dissipations. It is not as at Cannes, where you must keep a carriage of your own. At Nice you can call a *fiacre* off the stand, and drive out to a dinner or a dance for a trifling fare. And the strangers wintering at Nice are extremely hospitable, though they are inclined to split up in international cliques.

Whether the attractions as we have described them should be an inducement to the invalid may be fairly questioned. We simply report facts as we have found them, and represent Nice as the antipodes of Hyères. In striking the sanitary balance, we must note, *per contra*, that it has hitherto been specially subject to the plagues of winds, dust, and sewers. As for the winds, they trouble every place on the Riviera, with the exceptions perhaps of Monte Carlo and Mentone. As for the dust, it is the inherent curse of a sunny climate, where the dryness of the soil is the chief recommendation. But with regard to dust and sew-

ers, we may say that there is a pleasing prospect of a great sanitary revolution. The public spirit and public energy have at last projected a very complete system of water-works, by which the stream of the Vesitre has been led along a canal for a distance of thirty-five miles, into great reservoirs commanding the semicircular city. Henceforward, the municipality that levies heavy rates and taxes cannot object on the score of excessive expense to flushing the sewers and filling the water-carts. For these canals are to radiate from these reservoirs at the foot of the Montchauve, and the water is to be distributed through all the shelving and low-lying quarters, from the hills of the Baumette on the west to those of the Montboron on the east. We may well doubt whether any amount of water will ever get the upper hand of the dust-clouds; yet the consequences of the coming revolution can hardly be overestimated. In any case, by flushing the sewers the visitor will get rid of stench which must often be pestilential, generating typhoids and kindred diseases. Also, it must do much to modify the dust, which spoils our pleasure, our appetite, and our clothes, running up limitless tailors' and dress-makers' bills. And besides that, it will cover the barren places in the hills with the most luxuriant vegetation. Half the hills near Nice have hitherto been abandoned to desolation, simply because each drop of water had to be brought up from deep draw-wells by hard labour.

Residence in so considerable a town as Nice must always be a matter of taste or inclination. For very many years Nice has yearly been becoming more of a city, as the country has been swallowed

in bricks and mortar. There are most romantic valleys among its embosoming hills. There is the most picturesque of walks along the coast-line to the land-locked harbour of Villa Franca. You should really be within comparatively easy reach of fir-woods only traversed by devious paths, or rocky dells where the banks of murmuring streamlets are carpeted by rich beds of anemones and violets. Yet, ever since we remember the place, unlike Monte Carlo or Mentone, you had for the most part to climb the surrounding hills by pebble-paved paths that ran between the bordering walls of vineyards or orange-gardens. And nowadays all that has become infinitely worse, since the slopes of the fashionable Cornice have been crowded up with brand-new villas, and the country-houses have been extending along the opposite amphitheatres of the Baumette and the Mont-boron. It is true that you are helped towards the country by the new tramways—that both omnibuses and *fiacres* are plentiful and cheap; nevertheless at Nice you are living in a city with its natural recreation-grounds far less accessible than the parks of London, or even the Prater of Vienna.

The grounds of many of the villas, though these are often rather urban than suburban, are very beautiful, especially where water has been comparatively plentiful. The commanding views from the windows and balconies on all sides are enchanting, embracing a picturesque variety of rocky and wooded hills, dotted about with their villas and country-houses, while the white city itself is sparkling in the foreground. Behind are the snow-capped summits of the upper ranges of the Alps; before is the azure sea,

flecked here and there with a fleeting cloud-shadow. And in the gardens are plants from the tropics flourishing in kindly luxuriance among the familiar productions of the temperate zone. Palms of imposing girth are feathering over the flower-beds on the terraces; while a ravine to one side of the garden may be left to ferns and heaths and its rough natural sterility. On the other side may be a lofty clump of the Australasian Eucalyptus—a tree which takes very kindly to the soil, shooting up from saplings into timber with extraordinary rapidity. The chief objection to it in a Nice garden is the quality that recommends its being planted where there is sub-filtration of sewage, for its spongy roots, spreading themselves far and near, suck up all the surrounding moisture. All the neighbourhood of Nice is, in fact, one natural garden, the European Cashmere, and the city is a very capital of flowers, where you might hold in the spring “a feast of roses.” There are shops that do a flourishing business by sending baskets of fruits and flowers to England by the express trains. In eight-and-forty hours the baskets are promptly delivered in London, and the only drawback is that the charge for carriage is somewhat out of proportion to the cost of their contents. And then when you do get beyond the garden walls, and wander out into sequestered corners of the wild country, you may go sketching or botanising to the heart’s content, and are up to the ankles in lush growths of wild flowers.

As for the best villas, they are dear, no doubt—though not so dear as it sounds, considering the length of the season they are let for. The rents rise as high as 15,000 francs—£600—but then they are

let for a minimum of eight months. And English people and other foreigners make a great mistake in only going for the three or four most disagreeable months of the year. True, they escape the worst of our English weather, but they generally miss the very time when the Riviera is most enjoyable, for the same remark applies to Cannes and other places. But not a few of the most attractive of the villas are let in handsome suites of apartments, which ought to satisfy anybody so long as the accommodation is sufficient. Among the most charming of these is that of St Lorenzo, facing the south-east from the slopes of the Baumette hills, and consequently sheltered from the mistral. It was built by the late Dr Gurney, a great friend of Lord Brougham, and one of the oldest English residents. Conspicuous on the opposite side of the town is the more famous "Scott's Folly," built by a Colonel Scott of the East India Company's Engineers. No money was spared, either on house or gardens, where fancy ran riot as in the stone-nightmares of the brilliant author of 'Vathek.' Colonel Scott's eccentricities extended to the arrangements for disposing of his body; and he had wrought for himself a submarine tomb in the reef below the rocky promontory that juts out from his garden. But God disposes though man may propose. The Colonel died and was buried elsewhere; and there is nothing but a monument to his memory on a spot that seems likely to immortalise his name. The present possessor is Count Gurovski, the Austrian Consul-General, who has likewise done something towards becoming a local celebrity, since it was he who introduced pigeon-shooting at Nice.

If Nice is a city running into

the country, at Cannes we have the country brought into a town. It is a vast conglomeration of villas in their gardens,—the paradise of carriage-hirers, and the purgatory of pedestrians. The distances are tremendous; the hills are steep; the carriage-roads ascending them are long and circuitous, and, as a matter of course, are terribly dusty. To ladies, and even to moderately lazy men, a carriage becomes an absolute necessity of existence. Though it was simply by a double accident that Brougham sought a retreat there, we may be sure that the Chancellor would not have given a second thought to the place had he seen it as it is now. We have no desire to run it down: it has undoubtedly no ordinary charms of situation, and a climate that comes very near to perfection in the absence of the treacherous winds. But those who go to it ought to know what they may expect: they will be plunged into a vortex of languid fashion, with all the more thrilling excitement of dissipation left out. There is little but driving in the neighbourhood to be done through the day; and the evening entertainments are literally up-hill work. It is no slight sacrifice to friendship, no small tribute to the capacity of your cook, if you prevail on friends to come up and dine at an elevation of many hundred feet above the sea-level, only to be approached by winding, narrow, and ill-lighted lanes. So much so, that when it is a question of giving a ball, entertainers from the heights must generally come down to some suite of apartments in the hotels on the sea-shore. Even then, and when everything else has been provided in profusion, there is a pitiful dearth of eligible young men. In fact, we should be inclined to say Cannes is one of the

most inviting places in the world for well-mannered fortune-hunters, decently connected. There is no questioning the fact that most of the winter residents are either in easy circumstances or actually wealthy. The rents they pay sufficiently vouch for that. Moreover, the very cosmopolitan society is largely recruited from the golden rolls of the English, French, and Russian aristocracy. In a single family there may be several fascinating and fairly dowered young maidens, predisposed to fall passionately in love by the soft climate and the scenery, and the provoking lack of opportunities. Chasing a stray Lothario of the opposite sex must have much of the excitement of stalking the solitary phoenix to the Arabian *chasseur*. And many of the matrons who mount guard over their treasures, with the monotonous days hanging heavy on their hands, will welcome the chance of fostering a flirtation, and arranging a match under envious eyes. There is a want of regular occasions of meeting in public. But *en revanche* we need hardly indicate the advantages of being welcomed into a villa-home as a valued friend of the family. When there is nothing to be done through the morning and early afternoon, save sauntering under leafy alleys and sitting in sequestered bowers, with perhaps the strains of a piano played by a sympathetic sister sounding softly from behind the half-drawn sun-blinds, love-making may make marvellous progress.

Cannes is a good place, too, for dallying with the pleasures of an engagement. All the world drives about in the afternoon,—the carriage either following the winding coast-roads to east or west, or climbing the surrounding hills by a succession of sweeps and zigzags, each

of them opening up fresh glimpses of the scenery—pulling up in some rugged gorge or some quiet sylvan valley. Thence you may scramble up the steep banks by narrow foot-tracks, winding through the thickets of fragrant scrub that grows breast-high; or through the thick fir-woods that clothe the sides of the rocky dells, with the streamlets murmuring somewhere out of sight in the bottom, and here and there coming out into light and evidence, where they fall in tiny sheets of silver over the faces of the lichen-covered cliffs. Then, emerging from the thickets of fir, where the dwarfed trees have begun to straggle and die down, you come on some brown hill-shoulder, which shows you a broad panorama of the rolling ranges of hill and dale that sink into shadowy plains in the middle distance, before they rise into the blue-black mountains skirting the northern horizon. But of all the objects that fill the foregrounds of the views, Cannes itself is the most striking and original. You see fine scenery elsewhere—you may see loose agglomerations of handsome houses in their gardens—but nowhere on this side of the Atlantic, nor indeed, as we believe, upon the other, do you see such a collection of enormous hotels monopolising the most commanding situations. They certainly do not run to the proportions of the monster establishments in Newport or Saratoga; yet the biggest are big enough in all conscience, and there are many more of them. There are over sixty of them now—there were only two small posting-houses when Lord Brougham discovered Cannes—of which a third or so are said to be first-rate: all have sprung up in the last five-and-twenty years, and all are said to be fairly prosperous. And considering the shortness of the season,

with the excellence of the accommodation, cookery, and general arrangements, the Cannes hotels can hardly be called extravagant; while the connoisseur in views, aspects, and climates, may pick and choose till he settles to his satisfaction. *Apropos* to hotels, that of Grasse, a little town most picturesquely situated on the heights, eleven miles to the north-west, has been coming greatly into favour of late. Grasse has been much recommended of late to certain invalids who should have the sea-breezes tempered by blowing over the land, and is resorted to by other people who like a quiet life and are fond of romantic mountain excursions. Under its warlike Counts it was a famous fortress in the middle ages, and might pride itself still, if its inhabitants knew its history, as being one of the three cities that held out against Henri Quatre, when the Huguenot chief had received the submission of the League, after reconciling himself to the Church, with the blessing of the Pontiff. But in modern times the natives have been either smothered in their flowers, or up to their arms in making sweets and confectionary. Besides the orange and the lemon flowers, which are gathered by great basketfuls, the little town is surrounded by broad fields of heliotrope, hyacinths, mignonette, and all the more strong-scented flowers, doomed to distillation in its perfumery-manufactories, after an ignominious association with the grease which absorbs their volatile essences. But in richness of colouring, if not in fragrance of scent, the wild-flowers that enamel the hill-valleys round Grasse almost eclipse their reclaimed rivals of the gardens; nor can anything be more beautiful than the beds of mountain-anemones near Gourdin, and others of the high-lying villages.

But for the pedestrian who loves a variety of picturesque walks, with enchanting excursions in the surrounding hills that may task all his powers between sunrise and sunset, perhaps no spot on the Riviera is to be preferred to Mentone. We confess we do not much care for Mentone itself, simply because we find its atmosphere intensely enervating. And if society is slow in Cannes, it absolutely stagnates in Mentone. But then at Mentone the lemons and olives come literally into the town, without those high blank walls that fence them elsewhere from the public. Consequently, by the way, there is a certain tension between the peasants and the increasing crowds of visitors. Strangers will break bounds and proprietors will resent the trespass, forgetting the golden showers that more than cover possible damages. Some half-dozen of delightful valleys converge on the beautiful double bay; along each of these a paved mule-track leads up by shelving steepes and easy stairs to a succession of villages, strung like so many pearls on a ribbon of white road that is bordered in the spring-time by perennial green. Beyond the pebbled path, where it loses itself in a very wilderness of stony and heathy common-land, we may strike away across the hills in all directions; and if we do not fear the chances of a sprain-ankle scramble, we are sure to strike some other path sooner or later. As all roads are said to lead to Rome, so all the hill-paths lead back to Mentone. One of the favourite expeditions is up the Gorbio valley, and it is a good sample of the rest. We follow the sides of steep ravines, looking down upon the seas of olive and orange foliage. And nowhere else in Europe have the olives attained a

more venerable age than in these gardens that gladden the Mentonese with their oil. In some of the most ancient of what we cannot call enclosures, each gnarled trunk, with its gigantic and contorted limbs, is a study in itself, and more than one artist has made a little fortune by them. Then, where they crown the summit of a jutting promontory, we look up through olive twigs and leaves to the houses of Gorbio. Losing sight of them again, after a stiff climb we emerge upon the village esplanade, half shaded by a mighty tulip-tree, the stem being deeply insected by the circular slabs of an ancient stone seat. We visited the place the other day, upon a Sunday, and the men had turned out on the esplanade for their games of bowls, while the women and children were gossiping or looking on. A more enchanting or health-giving playground it is difficult to conceive; for it stands at a great elevation over the sea, and is swept by the breezes from the Alpine snows, blowing freshly over the surrounding *cols*. And so airy a recreation-ground must be an inestimable boon to the inhabitants of such a village as Gorbio. There, with the motive, no doubt, of protecting himself from the summer heats, man has done everything to baffle the beneficence of nature. The tortuous lanes seem to have been mapped out anyhow on the narrow and rugged plateau of rock. You enter them by flights of broken and grimy steps, under gloomy, low-browed archways; the dustmen and scavengers must be abroad, for most certainly they are not at home; and the smells that almost overpower you as you hurry through the darkened alleys have free access to each hovel through glassless windows. Yet we are wrong, etymologically, in speaking of

"hovels," for the houses are really of the most solid construction; and each dwelling in each rookery, with its massive walls, seems to have been meant by the masons to stand a siege. Many of them may have been built five hundred years ago, though probably, except for the roofs and the shutters, a shilling has seldom been spent on repairs.

Most of the excursionists from Mentone stop at Gorbio and go back. In reality the most interesting part of the walk is that which takes you over the hills in the direction of Monte Carlo, descending through the "streets" of Rocca-bruna, one of the most picturesque of mountain towns and fortresses. The path winds round the bend of the Gorbio Ravine, passing springs gushing out of the rock, where washerwomen are usually busy. Then rising, on the opposite ridge we come on one of the most characteristic views anywhere along the heights of the Riviera. Turning round, to the right, we look over the sea, far away beyond the long low point of Ventimiglia, that forms the Italian frontier; while to the left, on the steep side of a lofty, sharply peaked mountain, we see a lonely little chapel coming out into view behind the jagged edge of an intervening hill. Walking on, and turning again a few paces further, that chapel, which seemed to be a solitary hermitage, has resolved itself into the church of an Alpine village, where the inhabitants appear to be hanging on by their eyelids to crumbling banks of friable detritus. There is nothing like a shrub, far less a tree: there is scarcely a perceptible trace of vegetation. How people should ever have settled there—how their descendants should have contrived to live among rocks that can scarcely give food or footing for

a flock of goats—is one of the social mysteries always being practically solved by natives who are bred to a life of endurance.

Nothing can be more startlingly beautiful than the sudden change of scene, when we cross the ridge to the precipitous slopes leading down to Monte Carlo. The jumbled mass of the roofs and battlements of Roccabruna are in the middle distance to the left; straight beneath, the eye loses itself between space and sea, till it dives into the depths of chasms below, luxuriant with orange-leaves and the lilac almond-blossoms; and far away to the left stretches the palace-plateau of Monaco, sheltering from the winds of the north-west the semi-tropical gardens round the oriental pleasure-domes of the Monte Carlo Casino. That diversified and magnificent bird's-eye view symbolises the delights of a stay at Monte Carlo. We have squandered more than enough time on our ramble, for all rambles must necessarily be desultory. You hardly know at any time whither you are going, and make little account of hours and minutes; and so much the worse for those who are tied to you. But in our idea, Monte Carlo, both for climate, scenery, and excitement, is the most entertaining of all the winter-sojourns in Europe. And in talking of excitement, far be it from us to glorify the pleasures of the actual gambling. For surely we have paid our footing, in former times, when the late lamented M. Blanc kept the bank at Homburg, and now we look on at the *Roulette* and *Trente et Quarante*, without risking a louis for the advantage of the Company. We can read the Company's newspapers and listen to its excellent music with a clear conscience. All the same, though it may be

more in accordance with "human nature" than with rigid morality, we find the gambling element adds a decided charm to the other charms of the place. If the heaven-inspired study of mankind be nature, still "the proper study of mankind is man." At Monte Carlo, under one of the most heavenly of European climates, we can revel in all the varieties of striking contrast. Say that in the morning, after coffee and rolls in your room, you stroll up to the town of Monaco. Contrasts again—and strong contrasts to begin with! The town, with its filth, and its open sewers, is but a slight improvement on primitive Gorbio or Roccabruna. But on the one side is the air-swept platform before the Palace, whence you look up to the "Lion's head," lately fortified by the French authorities, and down into the depths of the emerald-coloured sea, where you distinguish each swaying bed of seaweed, anchored half-way between the sands and the surface. Looking over the cliffs, by the by, you distinguish upon the upper ledges the refuse from the dust-bins and the hanging gardens above, that, being shot down, has been caught upon these shelves in transit. But on the other side are the banks of velvet turf kept in perfection, with the thickets of cactus incrustated with brine from the sea, and a dense growth of flowering geranium hedges, often eight or even ten feet in height. We know nothing to rival it elsewhere to the north of Gibraltar: and at Monaco the guns are laid out for show upon the plateau, instead of lurking among the leaves and flowers, as in the battery of the "Snake in the Grass." After a French *déjeuner* and a brief *siesta*, we go out for a long walk among the hills, in the wildest of scenery

and the most exhilarating of air, coming back to an excellent dinner with a better appetite. After coffee, we stroll down to the Casino. There we find reading-rooms, supplied with the journals of all civilised nations, with the very shadiest mixture of society that it is possible to conceive. There is a leavening of quiet gentlefolks and aristocrats temporarily sojourning at Monte Carlo; with sundry flying visitors of more or less distinction, from Cannes, Nice, and Mentone. But, as a rule, the scum of Europe is in the ascendant, and the dregs of society come frothing up through its scum on the surface. We believe that Monte Carlo does much mischief, because it attracts so many of the lower middle class to grief or ruin. But we are not regarding the tables now from the moral point of view, and we may say that for the student of life, manners, and sensations, we know no spot upon the globe to rival these magnificent rooms. There are volumes of blended comedy and tragedy in the queer characters drawn from all climates and nations, who fret away their little hour on that extremely cosmopolitan stage. Very brief their hour generally is, for the chances of the bank run heavily against them, and they play, for the most part, with extraordinary recklessness.

But there is infinite interest in the range of quaint and ridiculous types constantly shifting in a grim phantasmagoria before your eyes, as, winning or losing their money, they give themselves over to joy or remorse. We know that Frith's famous picture of the German gaming-tables was painted from fancy rather than realities. At Homburg or Baden it was *de rigueur* to win or lose with a decent stoicism. But at Monte Carlo self-restraint seems to be cast aside altogether, and a multitude of small adventurers, playing far beyond their means, are recklessly indifferent to the expression of their feelings. The penalty of their follies falls heavy upon them, but they are a curious study for the dispassionate spectator. We do not mean to enter by way of postscript into the vexed question of the abolition of these tables. We may only remark that, setting international jealousies aside, it would be a dangerous precedent in the interests of international morality to override the solemn treaties that guarantee the independence of Monaco. And if Europe is driven to make a money bargain with the Prince or with his respectable delegates of the Casino administration, Europe must be prepared to pay very handsomely.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXIX.—HOPE AGAIN.

"Hope, without action, is a barren undoer."—FELTHAM.

"And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams."

—E. A. POE.

WE left poor Teddy Lessingham disconsolately knocking about the billiard-balls, in full possession of which he had been left by the desertion of the faithless Challoner; and heartily did he wish, as many another has wished before him, that the damaging strokes and brilliant runs which came so easy when no one was by and when no game was on, would sometimes fall to his lot when they could be of any real value. He never could make head against an enemy—he always could win by himself. Just now, when his mind was full of Challoner and Matilda, and, moreover, of poor sick Juliet Appleby, he played like one possessed by the very genius of the game; he really wondered at himself; and insensibly grew colloquial and profound, as Teddy always did when under a soothing influence.

"Well, now, they will take it very civil of us to go over to the Applebys' this afternoon—they will think it quite the right thing; and if only Matilda and I could have gone alone—but I suppose we could hardly do that. Anyway, I shall take the flower out of my button-hole"—he had put in a Christmas rose—"it would not look at all correct to be calling to inquire after poor Juliet with a flower in my button-hole. Challoner may keep his in—I daresay he will. Let him—the Applebys are nothing to him; it was all very fine his looking so concerned and

all that just now; he put it on to please Matilda—and, of course, he is quite right to please Matilda—but he can't take *me* in. Too sharp for that dodge, *I* am. Well, now, I am glad I thought about calling, anyway; and I must take care that they know it was I who thought of it. I wish there was something else I could do. I must ask Mrs Appleby or Marion if there is not anything. Marion will put me up to it if there is. Matilda is no good on an occasion of this sort: she is flighty—that's why. There," having succeeded at last in extracting the rose—"there, Matilda would never have thought of that. I do believe now that if Robert were to die she would go to inquire for him with a whole peacock's tail waving from her hat. Unless I caught her, that is the very thing she would go and do."

At luncheon he was full of the same reflections, and ready to communicate such as he deemed fit. "I hope the Applebys will be in," he said, taking jelly with his venison.

"You are going to the Applebys'?" said Overton. "Oh! it will snow, you know."

"So I have thought all the morning," Challoner agreed with him. "Lady Matilda thinks otherwise; she has made up her mind to have another night on the ice."

"There will be no skating to-night, or I am mistaken," replied Lord Overton, who was a student of weather. "I have had my

walk; I went out early, to make sure; but if you are only going as far as the Applebys', a little snow will not matter. Are you going to invite them here, or anything?"

"Invite them here! Good gracious! have you not heard—not heard about poor Juliet?" gasped Teddy.

—"Eh? About Juliet? Oh yes, poor Juliet. I am very sorry," said his brother. "Bread, please," to the footman.

"'Pon my word, you take it coolly," rejoined Teddy, now really aggrieved. "How would you like to have small-pox yourself, I wonder? Small-pox! just fancy! It is about the beastliest thing anybody can have, and I don't suppose you are even going to inquire, or—anything," looking down at his unadorned coat; "neither you nor Challoner care a bit," resentfully.

"Dear Teddy, it will do if we take Overton's card," put in Lady Matilda, a shade of anxiety in her tone and look, for she knew how rapidly the horizon might be overcast were an impending storm not averted at the outset. "We can take Overton's card; he never does call anywhere, you know."

"Take my card, by all means, if you can find one," said Overton; "I wonder where they are? I have not seen any since——"

"My dear man, I have them; Mr Challoner will think us dreadful barbarians," cried Matilda, laughing to their guest; "we really have not much manners among us, Mr Challoner——"

—"What on earth do you mean?" burst forth Teddy in his angriest voice.

"I am afraid he is not going to be good," said Matilda, following Overton apart presently. "I am rather afraid of Teddy to-day. It is the reaction after last night; you know how little he can stand, and

anything the least out of his usual way always tells upon him. He did too much last night, and was over-excited and over-heated; to-day he is feeling out of sorts in consequence. Poor dear boy! I do hope, I do trust," apprehensively—"Overton, what *shall* we do if he has one of his bad turns now? It would be so very, so particularly unfortunate."

"I think," replied he quietly, "you had better not take him with you this afternoon."

"Not take him to the Applebys'! My dear Overton, it was he who proposed going. It is his own especial expedition. Nothing would induce him to stay behind."

"Then you had better leave Challoner."

She was silent.

"I really mean it," said Overton.

"But—I don't understand."

"Yes; I think you do. Now, take my advice; leave behind one or the other. If Teddy will not stay, make Challoner."

"And suppose he won't be made?"

"Then you must stay yourself."

That, however, was not to be borne. The walk was just what she wanted, and just what she knew Challoner wanted; and whatever Overton might hint about Teddy's jealousy—she supposed that was what he meant—well, surely she could manage her own Teddy. She had done so hitherto with consummate success. Only on one occasion during Challoner's first visit had any ill feeling ever broken out in public, though none knew better than herself how often it had had to be charmed away in private, and how many fond words, attentions, and consolations had gone to keeping her poor boy in that mind towards his friend, which made him still think Matilda's lover the best of fellows and good companions. That a mood was

now imminent, and that it would require care, tact, and patience on her part to avert it, was plain; but, alas! Teddy was now no longer the first. For his sake she knew she ought to have stayed at home. She ought not, for any pleasure of her own, to have run the risk of rousing further his already disturbed emotions and suspicions; but Challoner wished her to go—and she went.

Overton came to the door to see the party start. He showed no displeasure at having had his advice disregarded; indeed he felt none. In the depths of his heart he was strangely touched and moved by this very disobedience and pertinacity on the part of one who usually was only too ready to fall in with his slightest suggestion directly anything was wrong with their common charge; and there was an almost visible tenderness and wistfulness in his look and voice, as he stepped forward to his sister's side and saw how the other side was claimed. Was there anything he could do for her?—any way in which he could help her?

"Take care of her, Challoner; take care of her," he said again and again, and involuntarily his hand pressed Matilda's arm as he spoke; then, as if afraid of having betrayed his inward thoughts by such earnestness, "I do not like the look of the day. The clouds are banking up in the north. There will be a heavy snowstorm before long, and the snow will lie when it falls."

"Ha!" cried Challoner, exultation in his tone. "Snow, do you say? Three feet of snow round Overton Hall! I, for one, wish for no better luck." He was in spirits so gay, and monopolised the conversation so entirely, that the ill-fated third person, to whom neither query nor response was

made, and who would not laugh at jests with which he had nothing to do, found fresh fault with his companions and their society at every step. What an abominable afternoon it had turned out! How infernally dark the sky was! What a devil of a state the roads were in! Well knowing what such language meant, and why expressions were thus made use of, which she had long ago forbidden, and which had in consequence dropped out of Teddy's vocabulary, and were never heard except as birds of evil omen, Matilda could but turn a deaf ear and give herself more and more to Challoner as the walk went on. It was no time to speak to Teddy now; not by the gentlest whisper durst she risk an outbreak, and she would not, even to herself, allow that she had been to blame in bringing about the situation. No, she had *not* been to blame; a brother must sometimes go to the wall; she had but few pleasures, and this—this was more than any mere passing enjoyment; it meant—who could say what it might not mean? Challoner had asked her to go, and at such a time she could not afford to refuse his slightest request, nor seem to disregard anything that was to him a subject for hope or fear. Was he not already enough troubled with misgivings? She read *that* in his eye and voice, which made every trifle of importance; the anxiety he could not hide, the agitation, the tremor, the one thought of his breast, which was at length become too dominant for any effort to conceal it, all wrought in her a kindred emotion, and an indifference to aught beside what passed between them two.

And this indifference was dreadful to poor Teddy, dimly as he might perceive it. He felt that

something was wrong ; he was, as Matilda had said, out of sorts, the reaction from two days' severe exercise and turbulent jollity ; and what he would now have liked to have done more than anything would have been to have taken himself off then and there, and left the all-engrossed pair to themselves for the rest of the way. Nothing but the difficulty of presenting himself at the Applebys' door all alone—he who never went anywhere alone—prevented this : that staggered him ; no, he could not do that.

Yet how he wished he could. To see Challoner walking backwards over every inch of frozen puddle in order to hold both Matilda's hands and guide her steps—to see him taking out his pocket-handkerchief to wipe every stile she had to cross, lest even the skirts of her dress should be touched by the powder of frost which lay crisp on the top bar, it was too ridiculous,—Matilda, who did not care where she went, nor what a state her petticoats were in when she was out alone with him on a wintry scramble like this. He wished Challoner had only beheld her when she came home from Endhill, two days before.

"Pooh ! what is all the fuss about ?" he protested crossly, being indeed driven to his wits' end, when a slippery ditch being in the way—a ditch that he knew Matilda could have cleared like a deer had she chosen—she must needs be drawn delicately across with many a little cry of alarm and need of encouragement and support at every step. And he had himself her muff given him to hold, and must perforce stand by with his disgusted face, quite unobserved and uncommented upon, while all this went on !

"It's a deuced pity you came,"

he averred at length, looking the helpless lady straight in the face ; and as the colour rose in her cheek, he knew he had hurt her at last.

That was something, but unhappily it did not do all that it was intended ; it might silence for the moment, it might cast a passing shadow, but Challoner with a lover's sympathy was soon able by a lover's wiles to soften every blow that had not been of his own giving, and all went on as before. Poor Teddy, he was very powerless ; he tried to make himself disagreeable, and no one found it out ; he would fain have made himself scarce, but that would have been cutting his own throat. As it was, however, he bounced out of sight whenever and wherever he could ; now running across a field wherein was a pond whose ice might be superior to their own ; now taking a turn round by a farm to have a word with the farmer whom he espied in the back-ground ; now hailing a labourer going past with a waggon,—anything and everything to force himself into notice, and be, if only in tormenting, of consequence. What was it to him that Matilda had to wait on the bleakest point of the common while he explored a rat-hole, and why should he care whether she "thought she had lost him" or not, when he disappeared for so long behind Luke Hayfield's farm-buildings ? She would be willing enough to "lose" him ; and if it were not for the Applebys—and the poor fellow's heart swelled within him.

Once within the Applebys' door, however, there was an improvement : here he was on his own ground, here he was always made much of ; and after the privations of the way, it was something to be still some one anywhere.

He had fallen from his high

estate with Matilda; was it not only too probable that he had fallen for evermore? If it had only been a temporary thing, a piece of womanish nonsense, Matilda had now and again been ridiculous before, but she had always come quickly and gladly back to her Teddy, laughing at herself, and making merry at her own expense; but now—now,—and he shook his head angrily and miserably. How easy it had been to say, “You must marry again,” when no marrying again seemed ever likely to come to pass; but how detestable and ominous sounded his own advice in his own ears now! His heart was sore, and had been sore for exactly four hours,—ever since twelve o’clock, in short, when he and billiards had been thrown over for love and Matilda; that had opened his eyes at last, and the only wonder was, as every one will perceive, that they had not been opened long before.

In Mrs Appleby’s drawing-room, however, the young visitor was urbanity itself. “I can’t tell you how sorry we were,” he said: “it took us quite by surprise; I assure you it did—quite by surprise. We had no idea of such a thing; and when Marion’s note came in, Matilda was so astonished—you can’t think how astonished she was. We wondered what it was about, you know; and then we said—I said, we must come and inquire at once.”

“So kind,” replied Mrs Appleby, a faded prototype of what Juliet would certainly become. “Lady Matilda is always so kind. Directly the sad news came, we sent to let her know, because we felt so sure——”

——“Mr Challoner has just come from Clinkton,” said Lady Matilda, sympathetically; “he only came yesterday.”

“Indeed! From Clinkton? And

did you see my daughter, sir?” turning to him. “She was often in the town, I believe, though our friends, the Windlasses, with whom she is staying—and where she has been taken ill, poor child—live four or five miles out in the country.”

“I saw Miss Appleby once or twice, but she did not see me,” replied he. “Clinkton is a large place, and,” he drew near to Mrs Appleby, as Lady Matilda stepped aside with Marion, “we were in different circles. She did not mention me, I suppose?”

“Not that I remember. Marion,” but Marion did not hear.

“What a view you have from this window!” cried Challoner, “what an extent of country!——”

——“Very pretty; but,” said Mrs Appleby, possessed of but one idea for the time——“but you were speaking of Clinkton. Do you know Clinkton well? Do you know the Windlasses? Had you heard about the fancy ball?”

Had he not? He had heard of little else.

“Well, she had been going to that,” proceeded his hostess, reading an affirmative in his face, “and a very smart ball it was, I fancy,” with the usual habit of making the most of anything at a distance; “a very smart ball, and my poor Juliet would have much enjoyed it. But only yesterday,—and the ball was last night, you know——”

——“Did she go?” demanded Challoner, suddenly.

“Dear me! no, Mr Challoner; how could she go when she was lying ill of the small-pox? She was taken ill only a few hours before, though I daresay we shall hear presently, when the post comes in, that——”

“How very unlucky!” He was listening with all ears to Lady Matilda now, and Mrs Appleby lost him from that moment.

"You will not surely go yourself?" Lady Matilda was saying.

"I shall indeed,—at least I should, if only mamma would allow me. But she will not. Neither she nor papa will hear of it."

"And they are quite right, Marion." And then followed reason and argument, encouragement and consolation.

"And now you will just stay with a quiet mind," concluded Matilda, rising. "Promise that you will, dear."

("With a quiet mind, or not," said Challoner, sardonically to himself. "I do not insist on that adjunct at all, my dear Miss Appleby. Only be good enough to stay, and I leave it entirely to you to regulate the quietude of your mind.")

He had learned all he wanted to know, and nothing had been said that he did not wish to hear. Now he did not care how soon the visit came to a close. Juliet powerless, her family ignorant, Marion prevented going, the Windlasses prevented telling,—he could scarcely believe his own ears, as one thing after another dropped out, as if to strengthen his temptation, and make him more and more secure on the edge of his precipice; for so entirely had his fears of late centred on the Appleby family, or, at least, on one member of it, that, thus unexpectedly relieved, it almost seemed as if he could be assailed from no other quarter. Oh, something might, could, should yet be dared and done! Hope was again desperately rearing its unabashed front.

"Mr Challoner, you have been standing in that cold corner for ever so long," said Mrs Appleby's languid voice from the sofa. "Do come nearer the fire; do, Marion, dear, poke up the fire. Oh, thank you," to Teddy, who seized the

poker. "So good of you all to come out in such weather."

"The most glorious weather, my dear Mrs Appleby. I wish you had been with us last night," cried Matilda, coming forward; and as she did so, and then seated herself at the invalid's feet, for the few civilities preparatory to departure, her brother seized his opportunity.

"Marion—I say, Marion, I wish you would tell me if there is anything I can do," said he, drawing her aside confidentially. "Can't I do *anything*? Are you going to Clinkton? Let me go to Clinkton with you; I'll go any time like a shot. Now, mind, you ask me if you want me. You need not say anything to any of them, just send word to me," and he shook her hand a dozen times. (If Challoner had only heard him!)

But Challoner's attention was concentrated on Matilda, and *her* parting; and having at length got her safely out of the house, he was now only bent on making the most of his fresh reprieve.

"Good-bye; I'm off to Seaburgh. I have a telegram to take for Marion," announced Teddy, triumphantly. "She has intrusted it to me, and I have promised to go and send it off myself,"—his tone intimating, "Other people think much of me, if you do not."

"Don't be astonished if I am late," he added, having invariably found that this was what Matilda minded more than anything.

Ah! Matilda hardly noticed it now.

The prophesied snow, though it fell fast and thick after the light went, did not set in soon enough to hinder any one from walking as swiftly as he or she chose before then; nevertheless, when Lord Overton overtook his sister and Challoner within the park, having

gone out again himself as the sky kept up, it was not soon after they had parted from their other companion; an hour or more had elapsed. They had not hurried; they had not come quite straight

home. There had been time for anything, and yet there was nothing to tell.

"This is rather curious," said Overton to himself.

CHAPTER XXX.—MRS TUFNELL IN TROUBLE.

"Slips of the tongue are sometimes found very inconvenient by those persons who, owing to some unlucky want of correspondence between their wits and their utterance, say one thing when they mean another, or bawl out something which the slightest degree of forethought would have kept unsaid."—SOUTHEY.

Everybody at Clinkton was now thinking about Juliet Appleby. The insignificant Juliet who, a few days before, had been of less than no consequence to the world in general, and who had simply gained a superficial importance in the eyes of one or two people by peculiar circumstances, was now a personage to be thought about and spoken about, and inquired after,—was, in fact, next to the fancy ball, if not actually before it, in point of interest in many houses, whose inmates had not until within the past twenty-four hours known of the young lady's existence. A little goes a long way with the gossips of a country town; and much as the poor girl's unfortunate illness might be to her own people, and much also in a lesser degree to their friends and neighbours at Overton Hall, it was undoubtedly still more the topic of the day to those upon the spot, to the hosts who were to be sympathised with, and to the circle who could condole, and pity, and wonder, and have daily and hourly bulletins. To them, as was natural, the subject was all-engrossing. Showers of cards were left daily. People who had not previously been on visiting terms with the Windlasses seized the opportunity for driving up to the Court, while the more modest contented themselves with

gaining intelligence of these bolder spirits, and retailing it to those who were again indebted to them for the same. At every meeting the first question would be—"Do you know how Miss Appleby is to-day? Has she passed a better night?" or, "I trust we shall hear an improved account to-morrow. The Windlasses tell me so-and-so." It was something to get at the Windlasses anyhow.

"I wonder how Miss Juliet Appleby is to-day," observed Mary Tufnell one morning. "I think I shall go round and ask Miss Beadel; she is sure to know."

"It strikes me there is a tremendous to-do made about this Miss Juliet Appleby," struck in her father, somewhat gruffly. "It is nothing but Miss Juliet Appleby from morning till night from every one now. Because the girl has got the small-pox——"

—"Sure that is enough, papa."

"Enough? I did not say it wasn't. Enough and to spare I daresay, for her and those about her; but what is that to *us*? What the mischief have we to do with Miss Juliet Appleby, small-pox or no small-pox? She is nothing to us, and we are nothing to her."

"Oh, the poor thing, I am so sorry for her! I am sure I never

was so sorry for any one in my life," said Mary, with the easy healthy sorrow that comes natural to a fine girl, and does not in any wise impair her digestion. "It is so hard upon her, and——"

——"Well, of course; and hard upon the folks she is with too; and of course I am sorry myself for that matter, and wish 'em well through with it, but I don't see how it need concern *us*. *We* are not the Applebys nor the Windlasses; we have nothing to do with them or their set, any more than we have with Jones the butcher, or Japhet the turnpike-keeper,—not so much, for we know those two a deal better than we know the others,—yet I'll be hanged if I should hear all this fuss made if poor Mrs Jones or Mrs Japhet was taken sick."

"La! I am sure I should be very vexed to hear anything was the matter with either," said his wife, entering in time to catch the last remark. "What put such a thing into your head, my dear? Now was not that papa all over?" to her daughter. "Papa thinks we have no right to take an interest in our neighbours——"

"Precious little interest they have ever taken in us!"

——"And the poor thing to lose her ball too——"

"Her ball! what do you mean by *her* ball? The ball was not good enough for her friends, forsooth; the Windlasses turned up their noses at it to my certain knowledge; and yet they tried to edge in this shrimp of a miss, who wanted to turn us all into ridicule——"

"Well, I never! Now, papa," cried his wife, "now you really must not say any such things; you do not mean them——"

——"But I do."

——"No, no; no, you don't; not a bit of you. We all know

papa, Mary; but really," in some alarm,—“really I would not have any one else—Miss Beadel, or the Dobbs, or any one—hear him for the world; for he is so severe,”—her gentle tones might have mollified an ogre.

Tufnell, however, was in a bad humour. "They may hear me for half a groat," he said obstinately; "they may hear every word I say, and I mean every word I say. It is more than a man can stand, the folly of these gossips of yours; in and out all day long, with 'Pray have you heard how Miss Juliet Appleby is within the last five minutes?' or, 'How many dozen times have you inquired to-day?' The girl is not dying, or there might be some sense in it. I do not wish her to die——"

——"Papa!"

——"Well, 'Papa!'—I *say* I don't wish her to die. But, upon my word, I should not cry my eyes out if she had a few marks left upon her face. It would take some of the conceit out of her, coming down here, and fancying she was going to turn the heads of all the young men at our ball—at *her* ball, as you choose to call it, ma'am," to his wife; "forcing herself in on purpose to cut out our daughters—country bumpkins as I daresay she thinks them; wish she might not be glad to have some of the country bumpkins' skins and colour once she comes out of her small-pox, that's all!"

"Oh, now you are vindictive, my dear. You would not surely have the poor girl all over pock-marks? Oh Lor'! I could not have believed it of you, Tufnell. The very idea gives me a turn. Mary, my dear—oh, you are writing."

"What is it, mamma?"

"Just could you step down to the Hales before you take off your bonnet,—or maybe I'll go myself,"—pondering.

"What for?"

"I daresay I'll go myself. It will do in the afternoon. I thought I would just like to hear," speaking aloud her thoughts—"I would just like to hear how Miss Juliet Appleby——"

—"Damn Miss Juliet Appleby!" roared her husband, bouncing to his feet and banging from the room. "There is no cutting out a woman's tongue! I thought I had——" The rest was lost.

"Dear me! papa is in a way," observed Mrs Tufnell, placidly. "Well, I was a noodle to slip it out, but I had clean forgot—and who would have believed it of papa? Something has disagreed with his stomach this morning, I'll be bound. He has been cross ever since he got up, poor man. Well now, Mary, he won't like me to go, you see; so if you don't mind, just you run down and get the last news. It is all very well for papa to be so hard-hearted, but I know I feel just as if she was one of my own, and——"

—"And I too," said Mary, briskly. "I'll go, mamma. I'll go at once. I was only writing to Jem: I forgot to write both yesterday and Monday, and the day before was Sunday, and it was not worth while on Saturday, being so soon after he left,—so he has not heard a word about the ball yet."

"Never!" exclaimed her mother, reproachfully. "You never say so! I would not take you away for millions then——"

"Oh, never mind; *he* won't," said Mary, laughing. "We agreed at the first that we were not to be bothered with many letters. I hate writing, and so does Jem; you see he has not sent me a line yet, either."

"Ah, but he has had nothing to write about, poor thing. It is you who have had all the pleasure, and of course he will want to hear about it. I never like any one I

care for to feel about me that 'out of sight is out of mind,'" said Mrs Tufnell, shaking her benevolent head. "Poor Jem! I was kind of afraid from the first that something would happen to take off the edge of that ball. It seemed as if we were all too much taken up about it. I am sure I for one had it a great deal more in my mind than I should have had; I daresay," with compunction—"I daresay even Mrs Dobb, who had the whole thing on her shoulders, did not think more about it than I did,—but there, even papa was in a fuss over his pantaloons; and as for you girls—but you had your disappointment, poor Mary——"

"Oh, as to that, as Jem did not care himself, no more did I—much," said Mary. "I think it will do just as well to send this to-morrow as to-day, mamma, so I will go to the Hales' if you like——"

"The Hales? I have just come up from the Hales'," said a new voice in the doorway. "Was Mary going? Well, you needn't, then; they are all out: I caught them just going out. I thought I would go in to ask after Miss Juliet Appleby——"

"And how is she?"

"Oh, much the same. No better, anyway. The Hales are going out to inquire in the afternoon. I went in after cathedral——"

"Oh, you have been at cathedral?"

"Oh, I have been at cathedral—very much at cathedral. Well, somebody had to go," said Bertha, in her natural voice; "we could not let poor Emmy go always alone, and these Christmas services are such a point with Herbert——"

—"Poor dear, I hope she will not have to go through that always," observed their mother, somewhat anxiously. "I do think poor Emmy has rather a hard time of

it in that respect. Herbert,—well, they say a lover may be as exacting as he pleases; but really morning and afternoon too——”

——“Sh! Take care. I will tell you what I think,” said Bertha, slyly. “Herbert is like the fox with his tail cut off; having to go himself, he would like to let us all in for it too, if he could.”

“Well, dear me, let us remember what we are talking about; don't let us be profane, whatever we are,” Mrs Tufnell reminded them; “but the truth is, I was never brought up to church-going except on Sundays, and it does not come natural to me now. I don't say there is any harm in it; I would never go the length of saying that; but I know this, I get no good of Emily at all nowadays; she can never go with me anywhere of an afternoon without being all upon thorns as four o'clock comes on. If I have her for a drive—and she used to be the only one of you that I could ever get to set a foot in the carriage—she is looking at her watch all the time, and I'm kept in a state myself for fear we should be late; and then I have always to come back that way, round by the Close, you know,—and as sure as fate, if Emily is with me, it happens that I would like to come back the other way. Well, between it all, the hurry and the fidget, and the feeling that Emily, poor thing, thinks it not quite kind of me to come on home and let her go in by herself, I must own I do feel more put about than I'd like her to know. Often and often I would rather go alone; and really if it is to be morning as well as afternoon services——”

——“Oh, but it won't; not after this week and next,” said Bertha, reassuringly; “and no doubt, once they are married, we shall hear no more of it. Now, do listen to me.

I have had quite an adventure this morning; I have had an introduction, and made a new friend. It was at the Hales'. There was such a lovely young man at the Hales'. And Mary, I have the honour to inform you,” with a flourish, “that the lovely young man is a friend of your lovely young man. Mind, Mary, one good turn deserves another. I have always aided and abetted you with Jem Challoner, and now I shall claim return in kind from you. I have an idea that Jem's friend and I are kindred spirits. He appeared about as friendly a youth as I have ever had the luck to meet. And he was, oh, a very, very long way better-looking than—no offence, Mary—than either Jem or Herbert. Jem does not set up to be a beauty. He has *l'air distingué*, and that sort of thing—the *je ne sais quoi*, and all the rest of it. Herbert is pretty, I own, but my man——”

“How you do run on, child!” said her sister, with a shrug of the shoulder—“*your man!*”

“Ay, my dear, my man; surely I may call him mine until he is claimed by somebody else. My man has a nose—oh, such a nose! Grecian to a degree,—that's to say if it's not Roman,” in parenthesis. “I'm not altogether clear about the two in my own mind, but at any rate it is a nose of the first water—a nose to put any other nose I have ever seen, in Clinkton or elsewhere, out of joint for ever and aye; and he has curly locks and a moustache, and—and everything. I made my best bow, and he talked to me the whole time I was there; he did, indeed. I do like making a new acquaintance; I wish I had heard his name——”

——“You did not even hear his name! And you call that making a new acquaintance!”

“He heard mine; that was

enough; he heard, and he made good use of his hearing. He called me 'Miss Tufnell' several times, and inquired whether it was I or my sister,—I heard him distinctly ask Louisa Hale whether it was I or my sister who was going to be married to his friend Mr Chaloner? When Louisa said it was you, he spoke to me myself about it."

"What did he say?"

"Say? All sorts of things. Asked when it was to be? And how long you had been engaged? He was most particular to know how long you had been engaged?"

"Had he not heard?"

"Apparently not. It was quite laughable. He made me repeat it; and when I said "Since last September," he exclaimed after me, 'Since last September!' as if it were something quite surprising. He was immensely interested; he asked all sorts of questions; and when I chaffed him about his being so ignorant himself, he only looked foolish, and had not a word to say. Evidently Jem had not taken him into confidence. Talking dispassionately of Jem, I should not say he takes many people into confidence."

"You did not hear who this man was?"

"Of course they said his name, but I did not catch it. Louisa does sometimes mumble so that no one can hear her, and they all seemed rather stupid and flustered. He was their brother's friend, you see, not theirs; and to tell the truth, I don't fancy they knew

much about him. If only that brother of theirs had come in! Tiresome creature; *he* would have been of some good. As it was, I could not get hold of any one of the girls to inquire, and I had to leave before any one else did; however, I shall go down this afternoon, for I have left the library books behind me. A piece of luck, isn't it? Nobody can say I go to find out who my new friend is."

"Nor to meet him again?"

"Oh, there is no hope of that; he is off immediately—off for London by the first train this afternoon: he had only looked in for an hour, as he happened to be passing through Clinkton on his way from somewhere or other. He had slept at the station hotel last night, so he must have come from a distance; then he had walked up to call on the Hales, and his train was to leave about now."

Later on in the day she rushed in with scarce a breath left.

"Mary, Mary! what *do* you think? Oh, Mary! what *will* you say? He is a prince in disguise, an earl's son, and will be the earl himself some day, for his brother is not married, and he is the heir. The Hales's brother has told them all about him since I was there in the morning, and they say he is *such* a friend of Jem's, and that he is sure to be Jem's best man at the wedding. He is the Honourable Edward Lessingham. Think of me and the Honourable Edward Lessingham!"

CHAPTER XXXI.—NO ONE NOTICES TEDDY.

"'Tis an ill cure
For life's worst ills, to have no time to feel them;
When sorrow's held intrusive and turned out."

—PHILIP VON ARTEVELDE.

It was indeed our old friend Teddy, who, alone and unauthorised, but rising to the occasion

from sheer extremity of need and singleness of purpose, had thus appeared on the scene in those far-

away regions to see and hear for himself if such things as had been told him of Jem Challoner were true.

Who had told? Not the Applebys. After all that had been undergone and suffered and apprehended from them, they had done nothing; they had been harmless as infants. It was entirely through another channel,—but let us go back to twenty-four hours before the accidental meeting of Bertha Tufnell with the stranger in the Hales's drawing-room.

For three whole days had Teddy's sulking fit continued, the mood having begun as we know on the morning following the moonlight skating on the ponds, having set in with severity during the afternoon walk, and having culminated after an entire evening had elapsed without an inquiry from any one as to where he had been, and what he had done after deserting his sister and Challoner at the Applebys' gate.

All had been preoccupied—even Challoner had let him alone after the first, when he had made an effort or two, failed, and desisted; the truth being that with enough on his mind already—with Matilda on the one hand to love but not to woo, and Mary Tufnell on the other to woo but not to love—it was more than he cared for to have the burden of Teddy's ill-humour thrust upon his shoulders also; Teddy he must leave to himself. Moreover, he and Matilda understood each other tacitly on the subject. It was nothing to be disturbed about, Challoner assured the devoted sister—nothing which need discompose her; a passing indisposition. It would be better to take no notice—the mood would right itself. And with such comforting assurances she was easily, only too easily, induced to fix all her attention on the lips that spoke them.

But thus neglected, bad went on to worse in poor Teddy's breast. Always before, during such occasional freaks of dumb brutishness—for thus alone could they be classified—he had been tenderly watched and timidly approached: and he had been perfectly aware that little as was the apparent notice taken of his goings and comings, all the house was eagerly awaiting the prodigal's return to a better state of mind. Such a position he had thoroughly enjoyed, poor boy; to attain it had been his last resource in his present pain and trouble; but what was he to do when this, his one weapon, failed to take effect? How retaliate? How show his spirit? It was maddening, positively maddening, to think that there was nothing to be done. Literally, down at that stupid old place—and all snowed-in too—there was not a single thing a young fellow could do to make a stir, and show he had some life in him. Overton took no notice of anything; Challoner merely smiled a smile that drove him wild if ever he started an idea or made a proposition; while Matilda was too deeply in his black books for anything she could say or do to be right.

At length a notion struck him. He would give them a start and a fright somehow; a start and a fright, if he could do no more. He would be up and off some fine morning before any one was stirring; and it mattered not where he went, he would not reappear at the Hall until the people there had had a lesson.

"Run up to town!" exclaimed Matilda, in undoubted discomfiture and most unflattering amazement, when she received the message her brother had left,—it was to the effect that he had found he must run up to town for a few days on

business, and was not sure how long he might be kept there, and was not to be expected till he turned up,—quite a lively, jaunty, independent young-man-of-the-period's message, in short, which sounded fair enough in Challoner's ears, but which strangely disconcerted its recipient. "Gone to town! What does he mean? What in the world——?" and then she checked herself, and looked, with trouble in her look, at Overton. Nothing like this had happened for many a year before between the three, and two out of the three knew only too well why it had happened now.

"Where do you suppose he is gone?" said Matilda apart to her elder brother, as soon as she could find him alone; "where do you think he is gone? I cannot imagine; he has no one now,—we have managed to break with them all. I don't believe he has a single address."

"All the better; he will come home all the sooner. I don't really think we need be alarmed," replied he. "I suspect it is a mere piece of temper. It has been coming on for several days, but I thought it best to take no notice. I thought Challoner's being here would keep him straight—I mean, would keep him from openly showing anything amiss. Yet I warned you, Matilda."

"I know—I know. But what could I do?" said Matilda, looking gloomily out. "It is so difficult to manage sometimes, I——"

"To be sure. I don't blame you, my dear girl," said Overton, kindly. "You have often a hard time of it, and no one knows as well as I do how brave you are, and how patient. Cheer up," as her eyes filled beneath his sympathy—"cheer up; don't distress yourself; don't be anxious——"

——"I am; I cannot help it. I have such fears. Overton, if anything happens to him——"

"Nothing will happen to him; we shall have him back here all right and tight by to-morrow at latest; by to-night most likely. You must—ahem—pay him a little attention when he comes; make much of him; and leave Challoner to——"

"But where will he go in town?" She was not willing to talk of Challoner at the moment. "Where will he go? And what will he do?"

"Hang about till he gets the next train back."

And this was precisely what Teddy would have done, had not chance, for good or ill, put a sudden recollection into his head. As Matilda said, he had now no associates: they had weaned him from all his former comrades; and that so effectually, that he had now neither the means nor the desire to reopen any old intimacies. He had not been good, and he had not been happy in his boyhood; he had been both—under supervision—since; and the poor fellow was dimly conscious that it was so—and to do him justice, the idea of actually of his own free-will returning to the mire from which he had been drawn, never entered his head. He merely wished to pretend that he had done so.

But now, what should he do with himself? How pass the dreary day? As Matilda had divined, her poor simpleton was sadly at a loss, and all the gilt was taken off his gingerbread, all the glitter and dash faded away from his glorious emancipation, when he found himself in a London terminus, with nothing to do, nowhere to go, and no one to speak to.

Of a sudden he recollected Whewell—Whewell whom he had disliked and despised; but who, for want of a better, might serve his purpose in this emergency, who at least would receive him without

any troublesome questions or awkward suggestions, and with whom he could pass half an hour—half one of the long, dreadful, appalling hours before him.

With renewed spirits he jumped into a hansom, and gave the direction—which had stuck by him for some reason or other—and which he now produced and described with a minuteness that was not to be cut short by any knowledge on the part of the driver. “Yoicks!” cried he to himself, “I’m going it!”

Whewell was in, and it would have been hard to say whether he was more pleased to bestow a welcome or his guest to receive one. Probably in his whole life no such enthusiasm of greeting had ever been bestowed on poor Teddy before—it must be owned he was generally looked upon in the light of Lady Matilda’s adjunct; and the response such warmth evoked, and the change it wrought in the feelings he had formerly entertained towards the gay barrister, were such as might have been anticipated under the circumstances.

“Thought I’d look you up,” he began, cheerily. “Only here for the day. May I bring up my bag, as I am on my way somewhere else, and did not care to leave it at the station?—” (Whewell flew down-stairs himself, and with his own hand carried up the bag ere the speaker had proceeded farther.) “And so I am awfully glad to find you in,” continued Teddy, looking round him.

“I am sure you cannot be more happy than I. It is the greatest piece of luck your catching me in, too. I am up to my ears; but never mind—tell me about yourselves. How are you all? How do you get on in this atrocious weather? Lady Matilda, is she well? Is she—ah—in town?”

“Oh dear, no! She hates town

like poison; women do,” said Teddy, who knew no better. “No; she is at home, and snowed-up there. The most tremendous fall of snow we have had for years. Awfully hard lines, isn’t it? Just coming on the top of the frost, you know. Every one said we were to have weeks of frost, and the ice was splendid; you never saw such ice—”

—“Ah! you are a skater, I suppose? I never have the time for anything of that sort—at least, of course, I could make time, supposing—” He paused. What he meant was, “supposing you were to invite me to skate at Overton Hall.”

But his visitor, too full of his own affairs to heed either the statement or its amendment, proceeded volubly—

“Oh, you should have been with us! We had the best fun out. We had telegraphed Challoner down, and he said he had never seen ice like it.”

“You had Challoner down?” repeated his host in some surprise. “I thought he was to have been married before now. Is that not come off yet?”

“Isaid Challoner,” explained Teddy, with the idea that the name had not been caught. “Challoner, you know,—the fellow who smashed his wrist when he was down with us for the pheasants. You were there too.”

“Of course; yes. We went down together to the Hanwells, and then he had to lie up at your house; but he is all right by this time, I suppose?”

“Right? Oh yes, he’s right enough,” replied Teddy, with less warmth, as recent grievances began to reassert their pre-eminence in his mind. “There never was anything much wrong with him, I should say,” continued he vindictively.

"And what about his marriage, then?" inquired Whewell, carelessly. The carelessness was not assumed—he really suspected nothing.

Teddy, however, looked round with an expression of guileless innocence which was by no means badly done, and which meant this: "If you think to catch me tripping, and get out of me anything about Challoner and Matilda, you're in the wrong box, Mr Whewell. I ain't going to peach, although they have been behaving shabbily to me." All he said, however, was, "His marriage?" in an interrogatory tone that greatly pleased his own ear.

"Why, of course, his marriage. You had forgotten about it, eh? Oh, he will be a Benedick directly."

"Indeed?"

"Come, you know what I mean; tell me the last of it," said Whewell, still unsuspicious; "you must have heard——"

"But indeed I haven't."

"Not, really?"

"No," replied Teddy, pursing up his lips; "no—not a word." ("Well, now, Matilda can't say I didn't tell one good round one for her, at any rate," thought he.)

But Whewell's black eyes grew suddenly round and bright. "Did you not know he was engaged to be married?" said he, quickly.

"N—no; can't say I did. Ah—to whom, may I ask?" ("Rather neatly put, I take it," internally commented the complacent brother once more.)

"To a very nice girl, I believe, a banker's daughter, with a lot of money. Let me see, the affair must have been concluded shortly before that time he and I were with you. I heard all about it the other day, and fancied the marriage was to have come off by now. A young Hale, a Clinkton fellow who knows the family well, told

me all about it. Trufit, or Tru-man, or some such name it was. Odd that you shouldn't have known; Hale spoke as if everybody knew."

Not a word in reply.

"And he was with you three weeks or more, wasn't he? In fact until a very short time ago. And he never mentioned it, not to *any* of you?"

Teddy shook his head: he could not speak. Poor fellow! the diplomatic smile and unconscious air had fallen away to nothing by this time, and now all that remained of it was a pair of starting eyeballs and a jaw that fell every moment lower.

"I—ah—'pon my word, I don't know what you are talking about," at length he found voice to murmur.

"It is news to you, I see. I must say it is rather strange that it should be so. You were so thick with Challoner, what on earth should possess him to keep this from you? What reason had he for keeping it dark at all?" ("There is something up here," said Whewell suddenly to himself; "I have hit the nail somehow. Friend Teddy looks quite aghast. Can it be that Challoner, that great loutish fellow—but no, Lady Matilda took no sort of notice of Challoner, she ignored him; stop though, let me think,"—and with disagreeable clearness came back the last look he had had of the Overton drawing-room, and of a smile which had passed between the *quondam* invalid and his hostess, a perfectly innocuous smile, but one all the same which had caused this departing guest a twinge at the moment, though he had rid himself of the sensation afterwards.) "Challoner has been engaged to be married ever since September," he stated, calmly enough, but his pulse beat a little

faster than usual as he marked the effect the words produced.

"Well!"

For the space of one full minute this was all.

"Well!"

Whewell waited in silence.

"Good heavens! I—I—do you know what he has been doing?—do you know that he has been paying attention to my sister?" burst forth the young man at last. "Good heavens!" unable to be prudent,—*"to my sister! To Matilda! To—to——"*

"Pardon me, my dear fellow, think what you are saying; there must be some mistake," corrected his companion, in the soothing tone in which one speaks to a frantic child; but Whewell's own blood was now coursing quickly through his veins: "don't let yourself be carried away by—I mean, don't run away on the wrong horse, you know. Lady Matilda would hardly thank you for bringing her name into such a discussion; it is quite impossible that there can be any cause for connecting her name with Challoner's;—that Challoner could have ever thought, ever given any—in short, you are labouring under a delusion; you have taken hold of some false idea——"

"False idea be hanged!" exclaimed Teddy, passionately; "I don't know anything about ideas; I never have ideas: this is *the truth*. I could tell you——" But here he suddenly drew the rein, and checked the revelation on his lips. "Of course it is nothing to her," he said, in an altered tone. "Of course Lady Matilda," with a little air of state—"Lady Matilda does not concern herself as to—to—but we have to take care of her—that's to say—*confound the fellow!* I—I—I——"

"I had no knowledge of this, of course," said Whewell, busying

himself with some papers on the floor. "Indeed when I first heard of Challoner's engagement, which I did immediately on leaving End-hill, I concluded that this was at the bottom of his—let me speak plainly—his indifference to the attractions of Overton, and his desire to get away from it as quickly as possible. You must remember that he was always pressing the doctor—your doctor, the one you got for him—to say how soon he could go, and——"

"Oh, he did not want to go at all."

"You forget, no doubt, your early experience in a later," proceeded the barrister, who with his natural acuteness divined the case exactly. "When I saw Challoner he was fretting to the verge of rudeness at having to remain, and——"

"And he was with us for nearly a month afterwards."

"Indeed?"

"Ay, indeed; he was: he—well?"

"I was not going to say anything."

"Why did you not tell us about this before?"

"I never thought of telling you; I supposed that, of course, you knew. I took it for granted—he was Hanwell's friend: Hanwell seemed to know him well; and when I heard the news, I said to myself, What a duffer he must have thought me not to have congratulated him!"

"He never told a soul," said Teddy, breathing hard; "he never said a single word about it to any one. And here he has been down with us again—I say, whereabouts does this girl, this banker's daughter, live? At Clinkton?"

"At Clinkton? Yes. You know so much? Yes, of course; for his own people come from that neighbourhood, and his sister, Lady Fair-

leigh, made the match. Now I think of it—at Clinkton, of course ; in Clinkton, most likely——”

“Pont House, Archway Terrace?” cried Teddy, eagerly.

“Ah, I can't give you the address——”

——“And you don't know the name?”

“It begins with a T, I feel sure. But, see here—you remember Hale? Deuced pleasant fellow, with a beard. He used to be a chum of yours, he told me. He lives at Clinkton, I can tell you where, for I have had some correspondence with him lately,—you go down, see him, and he will tell you everything.”

“Go down? Go to Clinkton? I—I don't know about that.”

“Oh, it's easy enough—easy enough for a young fellow like you, with nothing to do,” said Whewell, rummaging in his desk for the address. “It will be nothing but a pleasant trip. And you are not a slave like me, tied by the leg. Let me see, you could be at Clinkton this evening,—you are not due anywhere in particular to-night?”

“N—no.”

“Well, you can get there easily ; I'll look out your train——”

“Stop! I don't know,” murmured poor Teddy, trembling all over ; “I really don't know,” shifting one leg over the other, the very picture of bewilderment and irresolution.

“If Challoner has been playing fast and loose with your sister,” said Whewell, suppressing a desire to seize his companion's shoulder, and start him by main force on the distasteful expedition—“if he has had the cursed impudence—I—I never heard anything to equal it,” he broke off with a half-suppressed oath.

“Not that she cares, you under-

stand,” affirmed poor Matilda's champion with feeble valour. “Of course it is nothing to her——”

——“Oh, of course, of course——”

——“But it is the cheek of the thing.”

“Ay, it is the cheek of the thing. The presuming hypocritical scoundrel,” cried Whewell, but still ever on the watch to see how far he durst go, “to take in Lord Overton, and you, and—your sister.” He choked a little, but cleared his throat and proceeded—“And so cleverly as it was done, too. I had no idea—why, he took no notice of—of any one when I was there. I thought——”

“Well, hang it all ! I don't know what you call ‘taking no notice’ ; he has never done anything *but* ‘take notice’ to my mind,” rejoined the innocent brother. “It is Matilda with him all day long ; he hangs about her from morning till night, and she”—again recollecting—“she can't well shake him off, you know ; it is not easy to shake off a fellow of that sort.”

“And he is down there now?”

“Down there now. I left him there.”

“And he came to you—did he come from Clinkton?”

“Came straight from Clinkton.”

“Now look here,” said Whewell, laying a hand—a strong insistent hand—upon the young man's shoulder—“look here. You will take this afternoon train to Clinkton ; I will look it out for you ; I have a railway-guide here. You can sleep at the Station Hotel, and call on the Hales first thing to-morrow. Hale will be delighted to see you. Make out you were passing and looked in, and get out of him all about the engagement. It *may* be off. If it is off, find out when. Mind you find out when ; for it certainly was *not* off when Challoner went first to Over-

ton. I should say, judging from appearances, that it is still on—on at this moment, and——”

——“And what am I to say at home?”

“Are they expecting you at home?”

“Of course—that is to say, I must send word somehow.”

“Send a telegram. Here,” said the prompt barrister—“here is a form; write there,” pointing with his finger. “No need to mention where you are going, but say you are off to see a friend. You can get back either by to-morrow night or Thursday morning,—probably Thursday morning. If Hale is not at home when you first call, go again; don’t leave without seeing him, if you mean to do any good. I suppose you really wish to find out the truth?”

“Yes,” said Teddy, firmly, “I do.”

“And you are game to go?”

“Ye—es,” less assured. “Yes; game to go.”

“All right; I’ll see you off myself. Give you some lunch first, and then start you. Of course you will be careful to let out nothing, while you learn everything.

You can trust yourself to that? Very well. There; that’s Hale’s address for you. You have your pocket-book? That’s the place; put it in there; you’re safe to catch him somehow, or at any rate some of them. He has sisters; go in to see them, if he is out; it does not matter whom you see or speak to, only find out the truth from *some one*. You’ll do that?”

Teddy nodded. “I’ll do that,” he said, with a frown, which was on the whole the most satisfactory omen of success he had yet shown.

(“Not quite such a fool as he looks,” reflected Whewell. “I should say he’ll do the job now, and perhaps as well as a better man would.”) “Well, you understand all you have to do, then,” he said aloud, “and—ah—I shall see you on Thursday. I shall run down to Hanwell’s for the night. I can easily offer myself for the night, and will meet you there.”

“What,” said Teddy, stupidly, “what are you coming for?”

“I should like to hear the end of this, as a matter of curiosity—purely as a matter of curiosity,” replied Whewell, smiling.

CHAPTER XXXII.—ASHES.

“Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry hope that didst arise
But to be overcast!”

—E. A. POE.

On first breaking loose from the loathed bonds at Clinkton, and returning to feed upon the fair and forbidden fruit at Overton, Challoner had experienced a vehement and reckless sense of relief: a sort of devilry of joy had possessed him which had bidden defiance to every consideration but that of present bliss, and by this every nobler feeling of shame or

pain had been for the time stifled. But scarce had he eaten of the fruit than the flavour of the ashes began to be felt. It was sweet in the mouth but bitter to the stomach; and every enchanting moment had had to be paid for by hours of subsequent torture.

A soft word, a tender blush, on the part of Matilda, would make his heart beat and his eye kindle;

and afterwards, in the solemn conscience-speaking hours of the night, he would recall it with pangs unutterable. Once she asked him to render her a trifling service—it was but a little thing, he was sure to like to do it—and she saw, she was sure she saw, his great nether lip tremble as he turned away from her thanks. How could she but pity, with that pity which is love itself, not akin to it only? His slightest wish became law to her. He could not ask a thing she would not do. Oh, how long, how long could this go on?

One night—it was on the Wednesday following Teddy's abrupt departure—Challoner was more than usually restless and wakeful. He was up, and pacing his room during the short hours. The idea of bed was hateful, that of sleep impossible. He must be thinking, planning, hoping, wondering, fighting down his misery and perplexity, battling with the mesh which he had himself spun, and which was ever weaving closer and tighter around him.

He had even been more than usually tender and lover-like towards Matilda that day. He had allowed himself to try yet further and further how far her exquisite compliance and sweet submission would go; he had courted every coy glance and sign, and wooed the very fall of her eyelids and blushes on her cheek, testing to its utmost the power which was so valueless, and which none but a madman would have dared to tamper with.

By every sign that love could discover, he had but to ask and this beautiful woman, who was all that heart of man could desire, and beyond what hope of man could ever have pictured, was his own. Never had monarch had so fair a kingdom set before him.

Never had one been more absolutely prevented entering into its possession.

Now, easy as it is to condemn the criminal weakness which had led the infatuated lover into this strait, which of us, when once in, would have been able to say for certain in what manner, or by what means, he could fairly get out of it? To such a pass had Challoner come, that to deal honestly with either of the two women he had been duping was to cover both with dishonour. And what could he do? Could he at this hour, without cause or provocation, suddenly trumpet aloud the truth, the whole naked dreadful truth? Could he suddenly stand forth and say, "I am a traitor," and there let the matter rest? Supposing the announcement made, it would be awkward with nothing to follow. Was he to suggest marriage or renunciation? Was he to ask Mary Tufnell to take him, or to leave him? With Matilda, of course, all would be over ~~for~~ ever—of course, of course, she would not pardon him? Certainly not. She would have nothing more to say to him? Undoubtedly, nothing more. They would never meet again? Never.

All the time he knew he was hoping and hoping. It would be bad enough, whichever way it ended, once the truth were out, but—he could bear a good deal. He would have to stand a curse or two,—he could do that. He would have to keep out of Clinkton in future,—he could put up with that. He would have to learn to forget poor Mary's name and the wrong he had done her, and the cruelty he had inflicted upon her,—that would be more difficult, but he would try, yes, he would try ever so much, if only Matilda—and this was the end and goal of every in-

ward contest,—“if only Matilda”—if only he could rely upon Matilda; but—he could not.

The sweat stood upon his throbbing brow as he leaned it on his hands, and saw in his mind's eye the day of doom approach. Self-pity was so strong within him that the water in his eyes forced itself from beneath their burning lids, and wetted the cheek on either side, and again his coarse lip shook and his chest heaved. Turn where he would, no light appeared anywhere in the labyrinth of his thoughts; round and round he wandered, lost, among them—up and down he trod the same stony track which led to nowhere.

He had that day received a note from Lady Fairleigh announcing her return to England, and begging his attendance on her at her hotel in London on the following day. She wished to see him, to hear about his marriage, to know what he would choose as her wedding-gift, with more of the kind,—to his mind the writing was like that of the recording angel. Yet he had, as we have said, tempted himself more than ever with Matilda that day. It had seemed as if he could hardly bear to let her out of his sight; his eye had followed her every action and movement, and he had taken note of every little thing she did and said, as a man may take a farewell of earth and sky ere he leaves this world for ever. Many a time thereafter he heard in the whistle of the wind on a cheerless eve the trifling sentences she let fall; many a time he saw her stand before him as she stood that day, and wondered that he had not then and there perjured himself for the one privilege of a kiss. He knew now in the grim night that he had been listening as one who might never hear again, seeing as one who saw for the last

time,—and it was this conviction that started the tear, the one tear which no other emotion had induced.

That the end must come sooner or later, he had, indeed, all along known; but with Lady Fairleigh's letter it seemed as though it were already there—as though a Nemesis no longer behind, were upon him.

At length he slept where he sat, leaning across the table, his head resting upon his arms. He slept, and woke almost immediately, shivering and affrighted. Good heavens! what had he dreamed? Matilda! could it have been Matilda? Yes, it was even she, she who had entered by that dim doorway over yonder, and who had seized upon him and would have strangled him with her cobweb handkerchief, holding his throat in the grasp he had once felt upon his arm,—and as he struggled for his life, imploring and beseeching, Mary Tuffnell—the other one—the girl who called him hers, and whom—shame upon him! he had gone through the farce of embracing as became a betrothed husband, with whom he had performed his part, and hated himself and it alike,—it was she who now flew to his rescue. Yet, oh, terrible! it was Mary he turned from—it was Matilda he turned to. It was the hand that was killing he sought to kiss, it was the deaf ear into which he poured affection, it was the unmoved face he gazed upon. She heard not, pitied not;—with a moan the sleeper shuddered himself awake, and the vision fled. Only a few minutes had elapsed.

Again he slept, and again dreamed of Matilda. Matilda was his wife—his beloved, adored wife; and yet between him and her, the object of his fondest passion, there was ever an invisible, intangible,

insurmountable barrier,—something ever kept them apart; he never felt her hand about his neck, her breath upon his brow. He would speak to her, and she would not answer—approach her, and she faded away. Struggling against the grisly prison-bars, he woke again. Another ten minutes had barely gone by.

But this was the last of such awakenings. Out of sheer exhaustion Challoner at length laid his head on his pillow and slept profoundly—so profoundly, indeed, as to be with difficulty aroused long after ten o'clock by the information that Lord Overton and Lady Matilda had been at breakfast some time.

"You are going to town, eh?" said the former, when the delinquent at length appeared; "you are going to town? Best thing you can do. See what a thaw! What a state the roads will be in! there will not be an inch fit to tread on. The country is wretched in a thaw like this."

Challoner explained that it was not the thaw but Lady Fairleigh's summons which took him to London.

"You will come back, of course?" said Overton, easily.

Now was the time; now, when brother and sister were alike listening, when both would understand what an apology and an evasion must portend, and when

—but the mentor's voice was roughly checked. Bah! he would not show the white feather yet; fate had been too kind in the matter after all, for him to play the chicken-hearted coward while yet he held a card in his hand. Come back? Certainly he would come back, and accordingly,

"By four o'clock. Yes, thanks," he said.

All the throes of the night had been gone through in vain.

"Have you only to see your sister?"

"That's all."

"Where do you meet her?"

"Grosvenor Hotel. She is there now. I shall have an hour with her."

"And that will be enough?"

"Quite enough," said Challoner, with miserable irony.

It was necessary that he should go—absolutely necessary that his superior, managing, ferreting, elder sister should have no notion that there were any dust-corners in his life which she could not poke her nose into; but an hour of her "Have you done this?" and "How about that?" of her sharp sifting queries and straight eyes,—would be, he considered, quite enough.

He walked to the station, and as he went, more than once he cast a glance behind. For once presentiment was right. The last day had come.

THE CHINESE ARMY.

THE army of an empire which counts 300,000,000 inhabitants, and which further numbers among its subjects the descendants of those hardy Tartar marauders who swept over the whole of Asia, and drew rein only when they reached the walls of Breslau, must always be a subject of interest to the rest of the world. More especially must this be the case just now when China is setting, or is pretending to set, her forces in array in defence of her territory invaded by French soldiers. What the probable issue of such a conflict would be is a point which has been much discussed, and has elicited widely divergent views. The numerical superiority enjoyed by the Chinese, and the reforms which have been of late introduced into their army, lead many to think that victory would rest with the larger battalions; while the ease with which in past years Chinese troops have been driven from the field by European armies, and the general want of martial ardour which distinguishes them, encourage others to maintain that the French might, if they were so minded, march again without much difficulty to the gates of Peking. That the Chinese have the fullest confidence in their own power and prowess goes without saying. "The few cannot contend with the many," said Mencius; and to this every man in China, from the Son of Heaven to the meanest coolie, says "Amen."

Like almost everything Chinese, the army displays, in popular estimation and official phraseology, "a more swelling port" than its real condition justifies. It has, no doubt, in past time achieved not-

able successes against foes of inferior culture; and within the last few years it has brought to a triumphant issue a campaign against the Mohammedan rebels in Ili and Kashgar, and has successfully stamped out a formidable rebellion in south-western China. But these expeditions were, after all, in a European sense, only mimicries of war; and in order to test what chance a Chinese army would have against a European foe, we must see of what it is composed.

Under the present *régime* the Chinese army is divided into two distinct forces, which differ as widely as the troops who stormed Tel-el-Kebir do from the men who fought at Agincourt. The one is that which is constituted and trained in the orthodox Chinese manner, and the other is formed of the regiments which, since the war of 1860, have been drilled and armed on the European model. In estimating the forces at the disposal of the Chinese Government, it is necessary to consider both these organisations, more especially as, though they differ, they are so far related that the men of the modern corps are recruited from the ranks of the older brigades.

The existing military system is, it should be remembered, that which was introduced into China by the reigning dynasty, and is based upon the organisation which prevailed in Manchuria at the time when the founder of the present empire (1644) led his Manchurian troops to Peking and wrested the throne from the grasp of the Chinese sovereign who then occupied it. Like the legions which fought under Jenghiz Khan, the

Manchurian army first took shape in the hunting-field. On stated occasions it was the habit of the king to go forth to hunt accompanied by bands of beaters, who, for manœuvring purposes, were arranged under four banners, coloured respectively yellow, white, red, and blue. Following a course which appears to be natural on the northern prairies, these beaters gradually learned to combine the duties of a standing army with those of huntsmen, and with perfect indifference followed their leaders either into the coverts or battle-fields, ranged in the same order and under the same banners. By degrees, as they became less of hunters and more of soldiers, their numbers increased considerably, and it was therefore found necessary to double the number of the banners. This was done by dividing each banner into the plain and bordered colour, in the following order: (1) bordered yellow, (2) plain yellow, (3) plain white, (4) bordered white, (5) plain red, (6) bordered red, (7) plain blue, and (8) bordered blue. Such was the constitution of the army when, in 1644, it marched from the Manchurian steppes into China. In proportion, however, as success smiled on the invaders, Mongolian and Chinese sympathisers flocked to their standards, and to these allies the ranks of the Banners were graciously opened, a complete division of Mongols and Chinese being attached to each Banner. The subsequent victories which led up to the seizure of the throne were won entirely by these composite corps; and as a signal reward for the services thus rendered, it was decreed that to these men, and to one and all of their male descendants for ever, should belong the inalienable privilege of constituting the Imperial Banner force. To all others its ranks were

to be closed; nor to any but the soldiers of the conquest alone were the duties of guarding the capital and protecting the person of the emperor to be confided.

The object of establishing these privileged corps was doubtless to secure to the sovereign a band of faithful janizaries, who should be attached by interest to his service; but Shun-che appears to have forgotten that in the ordinary course of events the potential boundlessness implied by his enlistment of all the descendants of the original Bannermen would, after the lapse of a few generations, become so widespreading that the line of demarcation between them and the Chinese people must become nearly if not entirely obliterated. Already matters are approaching this pass. At the present day, speaking generally, the whole population of Peking is composed of Banner families; and in the cities of the empire where Banner troops are garrisoned, their rank and file have become almost entirely merged in the townspeople. The tax imposed on the national treasury by the necessary support of this unwieldy and inefficient force is a very heavy one. Pay to the amount of 300,000 taels, equalling £100,000, is distributed monthly among the Peking troops alone, besides the allowance of grain which is dealt out to each household. In return for this remuneration every man is, in theory, bound to attend archery drill on a certain number of days in each month, and is liable to be called upon at any moment to go on active service. To ensure the enforcement of these conditions, a careful census is kept of the entire Banner population throughout the empire; and parents are compelled, under fear of pains and penalties, to register

their male children as soon as they reach the age of four years.

The returns thus procured show that in Peking there are upwards of a hundred thousand Bannermen, who are divided into 1151 *tsoling*, or companies of from eighty to ninety men apiece. In addition to this main body, and recruited from it, are five principal brigades, of which the Imperial Guard is the *crème de la crème*. Manchus and Mongols are alone eligible for this favoured corps, and are chosen in proportion of four men from each *tsoling* of these nationalities. Their special duties are to protect the apartments and person of the sovereign, and to guard the twenty-four gates of the "forbidden city" in which the palace stands. Their weapons are bows and arrows, and only when called upon to escort the emperor to his summer palace at Yuen-ming-yuen do a certain number of them carry trident-halberds and swords or daggers.

The "vanguard division" is composed in precisely the same way as the Imperial Guard, and enjoys the advantage of having half its men armed with matchlocks. It furnishes part of the guard at the gates of the "forbidden city"; and at the triennial review of the entire Banner force, its privilege is to hold the foremost place of honour. The "flank division" is manned by Manchus and Mongols taken in proportion of thirty-four men from each *tsoling*. With these troops also bows and arrows are the favourite weapons, though a small proportion of the men carry matchlocks. Six times a month they practise archery on foot; and every spring and summer, dressed in armour, they go through the same exercises on horseback. This division furnishes

a guard of two men at each gate of the "forbidden city," whose duty it is to sit holding a red bar across the gateway, and who rise only to princes of the blood. It also supplies the night patrols within the "forbidden city," who allow no one either to enter or leave the precincts unless he be the bearer of half a broken token which when fitted with the corresponding portion in possession of the officer on duty, matches it exactly. The "light division," as its name indicates, is especially intended for services requiring strength and activity. The men are drilled

"six times a month with the scaling-ladder, when they also fire three volleys with the matchlock; six times they wrestle and perform feats of horsemanship, one rider leaping on the back of another's horse, met at a gallop, while the rider of the latter similarly exchanges his seat at the same moment. Whilst mounted, they likewise fire three rounds with the matchlock, shoot three flights of arrows, and attack and defend with the sword and iron whip or flail. . . . They have, besides, six trials monthly in horse and foot archery; and twice a-year, for twelve days at a time, practise at a mark with the matchlock: each marksman takes five shots each day, and is rewarded or punished according as his varied success places him in one of the three classes of proficiency."¹

This is the kind of military exercise which particularly delights the Chinese mind. Such exhibitions of agility as somersaults and leaps are, to their thinking, inexpressibly terrifying to the enemy, and when accompanied by shouts and cries, cannot fail, they consider, to spread dismay in the opposing ranks. The "shout of battle" has, through all time, been

¹ The Army of the Chinese Empire. By Sir Thomas Wade.

recognised as a power in the fight ; but the "buxom valour" whose "grace is only in the heels," which is displayed by Chinese soldiers, can only inspire contempt among any troops but such as are even on a lower level of inefficiency than Chinese warriors. As Corporal Trim says, "one good thrust with the bayonet is worth them all."

The fifth great division is that of "artillery and musketeers," which is divided into two brigades, one of which is quartered within and the other without the city. Though nominally devoted to the use of firearms, they, like the rest of their comrades, depend more especially on the weapons of their forefathers, — bows and arrows. Their artillery practice is the merest farce. The targets stand at a few hundred yards only from the guns, which, though bearing high-sounding names, such as "a divine majesty not to be contended against," scarcely do more than dribble out the shot, which not unfrequently fail to reach the mark, though fired at a short point-blank range. In the attack by our fleet on the Bogue forts in 1834, the inefficiency of the Chinese artillery was conspicuously shown. The gunners peppered away at our ships, at close quarters, without producing any serious effect. Most of the shots fell short or wide, and those which went with truer aim for the most part either rebounded from the wooden sides of the ships or glanced off them. The Chinese have never understood the art of gunnery ; and though they have known the use of gunpowder for three centuries, they have never (until quite lately) succeeded in manufacturing it with any degree of skill, nor even in turning the wretched compound they called by that name to

the best advantage. Indeed the difference between it and European gunpowder is scarcely less than that between their old ballistæ (*paou*) and their modern cannon, which bear the same designation. It was this community of name which gave rise to the mistaken belief that the Chinese invented gunpowder before it was known in Europe. Frequent mention is made in history of the early use of *paou* (ballistæ) in the conduct of sieges, and it was carelessly inferred that these were the same weapons as the *paou* (cannon) of the present day. The originator of the mistake may, however, console himself with the knowledge that as far as the offensive power of the two kinds of ordnance is concerned his error was immaterial, since the one was probably as effective as—indeed it could scarcely be less effective than—the other.

But besides these five grand divisions, there are a number of different corps to whom are attaching duties of a more or less military character—such, for instance, as buckler-men, whip-bearers, falconers, camp-followers, and "orbo." These last carry a kind of *cheval-de-frise*, called by the Chinese "stag-horns," with which they enclose the camp of the force to which they are attached. The "stag-horns" are made of bamboo poles, which are so thrust through horizontally placed beams of wood as to form supports to the beams, while at the same time they present a *cheval-de-frise* to the enemy.

As has already been indicated, the head-quarters of the Eight Banners are at Peking ; but, both for strategic purposes and fiscal convenience, large divisions are stationed at different points in the metropolitan province. Alto-

gether, forty-one out of the total number of fifty-two divisions are quartered in the capital and the surrounding districts, the remainder being stationed in Manchuria, Turkestan, and in eleven of the outlying provinces of China proper. Not unnaturally, in a country where the provincial administration is notoriously corrupt, the efficiency of these local corps is in inverse ratio to their distance from the capital. For the most part, the men belonging to them have lost all semblance of the martial bearing which it is charitable to suppose they once possessed, and which is still to some extent maintained in the metropolitan regiments; and the only qualities which distinguish them from the civil populations are an unusual aversion to all kinds of work, and a more than common addiction to the pleasant vices. As a matter of fact, the privileges belonging to the Banner-man have been to him only as gifts from Pandora's box. From blessings they have been turned into curses, and to their enervating influences must mainly be attributed the general inefficiency of the troops. It is impossible to imagine a greater contrast than that between the hardy warriors who placed Shun-che on his throne and their effete representatives who now serve Kwang-sü. If a striking instance were wanted of the enervating effect of conferring inalienable state grants and privileges on a whole class, the condition of these degenerate soldiers would supply every requirement. Possessed of pay and allowances which are just sufficient to eke out a meagre existence, they find themselves raised above the positive obligation to work, and being thus free to choose between idleness with poverty, and work with a

competence, they have in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred deliberately chosen the former combination. The same evil spirit of idleness nullifies the effects of other privileges placed to their account. With the intention of encouraging them to enter official life, they are exempted by charter from the necessity of competing for the lowest literary degree, the possession of which is necessary to all others as a qualification for the first step in the mandarinat. But although the path to preferment is thus made smooth before them, the returns show that only ten per cent of the mandarinat are drawn from their ranks, the remainder being made up of civilian Chinamen.

Fortunately for the stability of the Chinese Government, it has another force to depend upon besides these unprofitable *vexillarii*,—namely, the Army of the Green Standard, or, in other words, the Chinese provincial troops. This force, which numbers in all about 1,000,000 men, is made up of both soldiers and sailors; and though it must be confessed that the soldiers are quite as unmilitary as the Banner-men, they yet serve useful purposes as sedentary garrisons and local constabulary. Their special function is to keep in check the dangerous classes; and this their organisation, slight and imperfect as it is, enables them to do, at the same time that their intimate acquaintance with the haunts and habits of their charges, from whose ranks they are not unfrequently recruited, serves to facilitate the detection of crime. The men of this force in each province are placed under the orders of the Viceroy, Governor, and Tatar General, in such proportions as to equalise the power in the hands of those officials; and on rare emergencies they are called upon

to take the field against the border tribes and the aborigines of the central provinces. But, with these exceptions,

"they seem to be devoted to the duty of detecting or preventing robbery, contrabandism, and other crimes; of escorting stores, bullion to the mint, or criminals from one jurisdiction to another. The collection of the revenue and the postal establishment are also beholden to them; and the high officers charged with the supervision of the river embankments in the east and centre of China, and the transmission of grain from the centre and south to the capital, have, besides larger bodies of workmen and other civil employees, a certain force of Green Standard soldiers at their disposal."¹

In the province of Kwantung (Canton) there are said to be in ordinary times about 70,000 of these troops. Having few military duties to perform, their arms, which consist of swords, spears, matchlocks, and bows and arrows, are allowed to hang rusting on the barrack-walls, except on the days when custom requires the men to muster on the parade-ground. These periodical reviews are the only occasions on which they appear as a combined force. When active operations in the field become necessary they remain impassive, and are content to see the provincial militia, or "Braves," as these troops are commonly called, assume in their stead the pride and panoply of war. The Braves are in China pretty much what the Bashi-Bazouks are in Turkey. They are only enlisted on emergencies, and are disbanded again as soon as the occasions for their enrolment have disappeared. From this short and intermittent term of service it follows that their knowledge of drill

and of the use of arms can only be most elementary; and if it were not that when in the field they are generally associated with Banner troops, they would be little better than a mob. Even at their best they are more like Falstaff's ragged regiment than the soldiers of a great empire, and are hardly more dreaded by the enemy than by the people of the towns and villages through which they pass. But ragged, undrilled, and disreputable as they undoubtedly are, they were sufficient for the protection of the empire as long as the only foes they had to face were barbarous border tribes and local banditti. The appearance of European troops on Chinese soil put an entirely different complexion on affairs; but still it was only after sustaining repeated defeats that the least suspicion of the inefficiency of this and other branches of the military service first began to dawn upon the Chinese official mind.

But even then it was only by slow and small degrees that the most enlightened Chinamen could be brought to acknowledge that their military system was inferior to that of the "Western barbarians." China has been for so many centuries "cock-of-the-walk" in Eastern Asia, that she has become thoroughly imbued with a belief in her superiority over the rest of the world, and it required several severe shocks and several unmistakable overthrows before she could bring herself to admit that she had anything to learn from other people. "I have heard," said Mencius, "of men using the doctrines of the great land to change barbarians, but I have never yet heard of any being changed by barbarians. I have heard of birds leaving dark valleys to remove to lofty trees,

¹ The Army of the Chinese Empire. By Sir Thomas Wade.

but I have not heard of their descending from lofty trees to enter into dark valleys." Good easy man! it never occurred to him that there might be other trees even loftier than those he knew of; nor since his day have his fellow-countrymen become one atom more enlightened on the position of China with respect to other countries.

In turning to the navy, we reach even a lower depth of inefficiency than in either the Banner or the provincial forces. It has not often happened that the troops have been compelled to acknowledge themselves incapable of dealing with rebels and banditti on shore, but the records of the navy are full of instances in which pirates have so triumphantly defeated and defied the imperial fleet, that the Government has been compelled to buy over the chiefs by offers of official employment. On paper, however, the list of war-vessels makes a fine show; and unless more was known of their capabilities than meets the eye, it might well be assumed that the coasts would be safe from all ill under the protection of the 2192 vessels which are supposed to patrol the seas. It was in this branch of the service that the superiority of foreigners was first recognised. Of our troops the Chinese had little experience before the war of 1860, but they had before that had abundant opportunities of testing the strength of our ships and the destructive force of their guns. City walls which had nothing to fear from such artillery as any Chinese force could bring against them, fell as flat as the walls of Jericho before the broadsides of our frigates; and forts which to the native eye appeared capable of resisting any cannonade, crumbled to pieces at the first discharge of our cannon. Having learned wisdom

by such discomfitures, the Canton authorities more than once begged the help of our ships to destroy piratical fleets which had outgrown the strength of his Imperial Majesty's navy. Publicly to acknowledge to the full the obligations thus incurred was plainly repugnant to the Chinese mind; and it is curious to observe in the reports of these engagements presented to the Throne, the excuses given by the mandarins for the part played by the barbarian vessels in the successes gained.

The complete overthrow of the Imperial land forces in the campaign of 1860, and the threatening aspect of the Tai-ping rebellion, brought the question of military reform within the range of practical politics; and at the request of Prince Kung, English officers were allowed to give instruction in infantry and artillery drill to Chinese regiments stationed at Tientsin and Shanghai. Meanwhile a force, which had earned for itself the name of the Ever-Victorious Army, had been organised by an American named Ward to act against the Tai-pings; and though these levies scarcely deserved the title of drilled soldiers, they yet showed to advantage, both as regards discipline and arms, by the side of Chinese troops, and proved their superiority over the rebels on many a hard-fought field. The logic of these facts was fully recognised by Li Hung-chang, then Governor of Chekiang, who, taking advantage of the presence of British regiments at Shanghai, enlisted the services of several officers to assist in the establishment of powder-mills and armouries at that place, and in drilling the Chinese troops on the English model.

As is well known, Gordon succeeded to the command of the Ever-Victorious Army after the

death of Ward and dismissal of Burgevin in 1862, and in a remarkably short space of time his boundless energy and immense force of character effected a marked improvement in the training and martial qualities of the men. In point of numbers the force never at any time exceeded 5000 rank and file, who, with the exception of one regiment, which was supplied with Prussian rifles, and 300 possessors of Enfields, were armed with nothing better than smooth-bore muskets. The weapons of the artillery were not much more formidable than those of the infantry. They consisted of two 8-inch howitzers, four 32-pounder guns, three 24-pounder howitzers, twelve 12-pounder howitzers, ten American 12-pounder howitzers, eight 4½-inch howitzers, fourteen mortars, and six rocket-tubes. With this small force thus equipped, Gordon overthrew large armies of Tai-pings, captured walled cities, and broke the back of the rebellion, which for twelve years had disturbed the richest provinces of the empire, and which had even threatened the existence of the throne itself. The events of this wonder-working campaign are so well known through the late Andrew Wilson's graphic descriptions in his 'Ever-Victorious Army' (1868), that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them in detail. Suffice it to say that when Gordon took the field he found the rebels in possession of the rich and fertile "peninsula formed by the river Yang-tsze and the Bay of Hangchow, an immense alluvial flat . . . having a superficial area of nearly 50,000 square miles;" that in the course of fourteen months he fought twenty-four successful engagements, received the surrender of two cities, and captured ten other cities and fortified places; that by

these successes he cleared the peninsula of Tai-pings, and finally placed Nanking, the rebel capital, within the grasp of the Imperialists.

The extraordinary results thus obtained deepened the impression already made on the more enlightened Chinese statesmen, notably Li and his great rival Tso Tsung-t'ang, the former of whom took immediate advantage of the capture of Nanking in 1864 to establish his principal arsenal at that city. To the manufacture of arms he added the construction of ships of war, and subsequently a torpedo factory and school. In emulation of these progressive acts, Tso Tsung-t'ang opened in 1866 an arsenal and ship-yards at Foochow, under the direction of M. Giguel, a retired French naval officer. To this establishment he attached schools of theoretical and practical navigation, naval construction, chronometer-making, and one for Chinese apprentices. Meanwhile the works which Li had originally founded at Shanghai were kept busily employed in turning out muskets, shell, and cannon; and at Tientsin similar works produced the same warlike materials under the supervision of Chung How. But these chieftains were not content with possessing weapons and the means of producing them. They were as eager in pursuit of drill-instructors as of guns; and as there are always numbers of retired officers and others who are willing to take service in any part of the world and under any flag, they had no difficulty in securing the services of men who were ready and able to convert raw recruits into trained soldiers, and, if necessary, to lead them into action. With the nucleus of an army left him by the disbandment of Gordon's force, Li was

speedily able to surround himself with a formidable array of drilled regiments, armed with the most approved kinds of rifles and guns. And between these troops and himself he succeeded in establishing so intimate a relation, that when in course of time he was appointed Viceroy of the metropolitan province, they followed him as a matter of course to his new post. On the possible political consequences of the possession by a powerful subject of a force vastly superior in equipment and training to the rest of the Imperial army it is unnecessary here to dilate. But it cannot be denied that it has placed Li in a position of power which, in the hands of a less loyal official, would be a formidable danger to the State.

It is curious to observe that in a country so eminently pacific and so opposed to all change as China, the first step onward should have been made in the direction of military reform. To the adoption of inventions conducing to peaceful developments and commercial prosperity the Chinese have persistently shown a rooted aversion; and only for murderous weapons, and for a knowledge how best to turn them to deadly advantage, have they displayed any marked acquisitiveness. But paradoxical as it may seem, the reform was only tolerated in order to prevent reform; for had it not been generally believed that the maintenance intact of their national institutions depended on the army being strengthened, the introduction of the European military system and weapons would never have received either the sanction of the Government or the approval of the people. It is felt that China, in order to be free, must be strong. This has been the tenor of the advice of late years offered to the Throne by

the most noted patriots. In a celebrated memorial addressed to the Emperor, Tseng Kwo-fan, the father of the present Chinese Minister in England, after stating his opinion that "to railroads, steamers plying in the inland waters, allowing foreigners to engage in the salt trade, and to residence in the interior for commercial purposes, a strenuous resistance should be made as destructive to our people's interest," adds: "These points should, however, be discussed in a conciliatory manner, since foreigners are now in the ascendant; but we cannot, to the neglect of the misery of our own people, follow all the windings through which complaisance would lead us. Should times ever alter, and China be in the ascendant, while foreigners are weak, we shall then wish to do no more than protect the Chinese, nor shall we seek for military glory beyond the seas."

It is this desire on the part of the mandarins to be in a position of independent and isolated security, that has made it possible for Li and others to raise the forces which now follow their standards, though it is impossible to suppose that these leaders do not know as clearly as those Europeans who have watched the course of events, that when once the flood-gates of material progress have been opened, it is impossible so to stem the current as arbitrarily to limit its volume and direction, regardless of the growing requirements of the people.

The troops which follow Tso Tsung-t'ang are in no way inferior to Li's force; and they possess the additional advantage of having had the experience of a long and arduous campaign in Central Asia. When, in 1874, it was deemed that the time had

come to recover the provinces of Kuldja and Kashgar from the Mohammedan rebels, the task was confided to Tso, who, as a result of the preparations he had made, was at once able to bring into the field 50,000 well equipped and disciplined troops. It will be remembered with what curiosity the slow and leisurely advance of this force was watched by Europe, — how, during two successive winters, while on the march, the soldiers ploughed the ground, and sowed the corn which was to nourish them during the ensuing years; how, after each harvest had been gathered, they pushed steadily on; finally, with what decisive blows they crushed the enemy, and recovered the revolted provinces. Tso is generally regarded as being hostile to foreigners, but being an honest man, he would be the first to acknowledge that to his Krupp guns he owed the capture of Manas and other fortresses, and to the Remington rifles of his men his easy victories over the rebels. Indeed, in his memorial to the Throne reporting the capture of Manas, he makes special mention of the effect produced on the walls by his “heavy breech-loading shell-guns.” This veteran force, which was largely recruited from the province of Hunan, is now quartered in and about Nanking, and forms a material guarantee for the preservation of peace and order in the central provinces of the empire.

Even in the capital, that hot-bed of prejudices and headquarters of obstruction, the wisdom of introducing an element of real strength into the garrison was recognised after the appearance of the allied soldiers within the gates of Peking, and the burning of the summer

palace; and, in consequence, a field force, comprising the *élite* of the Banner troops, was organised on the European system, and armed with European weapons. The title of *Shin ki ying* given to this division

“was borrowed from the history of the Ming dynasty, when, on the first introduction of firearms in the fifteenth century, the designation of *Shin ki*, or ‘divine mechanism,’ was attributed to the new engines of warfare. The field force numbers some 18,000 or 20,000 men, including cavalry, artillery, and rifle regiments, all of whom are drilled and manœuvred after the European fashion. The instruction of these troops is based upon the lessons in European drill which were given to detachments sent to Tientsin for the purpose of studying under British instructors in 1862-1865.”¹

In addition also to the *Shin ki ying*, a body of drilled Braves is quartered in the Chinese city at Peking as a further protection to the Court.

The success which has hitherto invariably attended the employment of the drilled troops against the domestic enemies of China has led to an extensive development of the new systems of arming and manœuvring. In many parts of the empire, besides those already mentioned, depots have been established for training recruits in the new method. To the men thus disciplined are intrusted all the important points on the frontiers, and their ready capability of taking the field whenever emergencies arise has almost entirely deprived the troops of the Eight Banners, the Green Standard, and the Braves, of all necessity for girding on their armour. On the line of the Amur ten thousand of these

¹ The Chinese Government. By W. F. Mayers.

men stand as a protection against the northern neighbour of China, who, rightly or wrongly, is regarded as an encroaching Power; and five hundred hold the pass of Kalgan, which separates China from Mongolia. In Manchuria a strong force occupies the principal garrisons; and from a memorial from the governor of that dependency which appears in the 'Peking Gazette,' it appears that that official is fully alive to the value of rifles and *k'e-lu-pu* (Krupp) guns, which he is good enough to say are "manageable, strong, and effective weapons." Over the banditti, which have been accustomed to ravish the part of Manchuria in the neighbourhood of Newchwang, the drilled troops have lately achieved an overwhelming victory, or rather series of victories. In response to an urgent request for help from the local officials, Li sent to Newchwang a regiment of 1100 men, who, with most unoriental-like speed, pursued the banditti from stronghold to stronghold, until they had completely annihilated them; and the country now has rest after having been disturbed for several decades by relentless freebooters.

The recent experiences of the drilled troops in Tongking, however, presents quite another picture. In the absence of all statistics, it is difficult to arrive even approximately at the number of modern regiments in the field against the French. That some of the trained soldiers are taking part in the campaign is proved by the number of Remington rifles found on the lines of retreat. But if it be asked whether these warriors have accomplished anything more than might have been expected from Bannermen or Braves armed with bows and arrows, only a negative answer can be returned.

The ease with which the French have made themselves masters of Hanoi, Sontay, Haiphong, Bacninh, and Honghoa, prove either that the enemy is incapable of offering resistance or is unwilling to fight; unless, indeed, as it may be charitable to suppose, the commanders are acting in obedience to the celebrated memorandum presented in 1881 to Li Hung Chang by General Gordon, in which it was laid down that "China should never engage in pitched battles," and that "when an enemy comes up and breaks the wall of a city, the Chinese soldiers ought not to stay and fight," but should devote their energies to harassing the enemy's line of march. The events now passing in Tongking are living witnesses of the truths implied in these words, and the sooner Chinese statesmen realise their import, the better it will be for their country.

But to return to China proper: at the mouth of the Peiho leading to Peking, the forts which in 1859 were strong enough to turn back the tide of war, have by Li's exertions been entirely reconstructed on the newest principles, and armed with heavy guns of the most approved pattern. These alterations may be said to have secured the approach to the capital by water from attack, and must for the future form important elements in all calculations on the possibility of repeating the campaign of 1860. Other points on the coast liable to attack are also protected by formidable forts which bristle with Krupp and Armstrong guns. With the field forces at Soochow Gatlings seem to be the favourite artillery weapon; but on this point there is no uniformity, and in some places guns of every kind and calibre are mixed up in a way which must be eminent-

ly confusing to young gunners. Even from distant Sze-ch'uen a cry reaches the 'Peking Gazette' for the establishment of an arsenal, on the ground that the purchase and repair of the foreign weapons used by the troops in the province entail a far heavier expenditure than would be incurred by the establishment and maintenance of an arsenal. No doubt, as far as the repairs are concerned, this is true. Among the heavy shipments from New York and elsewhere it is only too probable that a large percentage of the rifles are likely soon to require the gunsmith's help when roughly and carelessly used; and when a mandarin reports triumphantly to the Throne that he has presented his men with a thousand Martini rifles for which he paid at Shanghai only fifteen dollars apiece, we are not surprised to hear that the armourer's services are in constant requisition.

It is impossible to determine exactly the number of the drilled troops in the different parts of China, but it cannot be far short of 200,000 men; and behind these are the Banner and Chinese forces, who, though notoriously inefficient and badly armed, yet, after all, possess a substratum of training which could not fail to be of value in case they should be called upon to join the higher organisation. But in estimating the importance of this force, it is necessary to inquire at what state of efficiency the men are kept; and now, to quote one of Mr Gladstone's wondrous phrases, "we impinge on a dilemma as hard as adamant." No doubt in many places the troops are maintained in a high state of training, and their arms are kept in good order. This is notably the case with Li Hung Chang's soldiers in the neighbourhood of Tientsin and Taku.

There, as elsewhere, "wit waits on fear"; and Li, feeling the responsibility attaching to the defence of the approaches to the capital, has used every effort to keep his men up to the highest standard attainable. This, however, is not the case in other parts of the empire. In a recent issue of the 'Peking Gazette,' a mandarin describes the condition of the national defences in these words: "Whilst the regular army—unpaid, undrilled, and with its ranks only nominally filled—has become next door to useless, the forces of irregulars who have been retained in the different provinces since the restoration of peace have also fallen into a condition of no slight inefficiency."

This, there is reason to fear, is a true description of too many of the provincial corps. Left to themselves, without the assistance and control of foreign instructors, the mandarins have gradually drifted back in the direction of their old organisation. Carelessness and a desire to be in harmony with the national system are probably answerable for this falling away. But it is obvious, from the reports sent in of inspection, that there is a growing disposition to revert from rifles to bows and arrows, and to return to the antiquated drill formation. The inspecting officer in the province of Gankwuy, in reporting on a recent parade of the troops, states, without special remark, that the regiments were put through various evolutions in the old and new styles; that each man was examined in the use of the bow and arrow and the musket; that eighty per cent of the cavalry and infantry hit the target, employing bows varying from fifty to sixty catties (a catty equals $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) in strength; and he adds, as though of less importance, that "in musketry and gingall practice, some

eighty per cent also hit the mark."

National conceit is a quality more highly developed among Chinamen than among any other people, and though perfectly aware of the superiority of the foreign organisation and arms, it not unfrequently happens that the mandarins shrink from publicly acknowledging it in the face of their countrymen. To such an absurd length is this paltry vanity occasionally carried, that officers commanding drilled troops have been known to reserve the use of rifles for the enclosed barrack-yards, and to review their men in public armed with matchlocks, spears, and bows. A want of appreciation of the importance of being thoroughly well armed and prepared for an enemy can alone account for the existence of such folly; and it will require some very convincing home-thrusts before these national coxcombs will be brought frankly to admit that their continued existence as a nation depends on the thoroughness with which they adopt European arms and tactics. Professedly, they are fully alive to the value of an ever-ready standing army, but unfortunately their convictions never advance beyond the abstract stage of principle; and though, like every other principle, they surround this one with grandiloquent phrases,—a Chinaman is nothing if he is not grandiloquent,—they content themselves with the invention of such phrases, and leave the truths they embody to take care of themselves.

"The army may be a hundred years unemployed,
But may not be a single day unprepared,"

is a saying constantly in the mouths and at the tips of the pens of the military authorities, and yet no

effort is ever made to carry its principle into practice.

Altogether, it is impossible to imagine anything more illogical and half-hearted than the way in which the military reforms have been undertaken. Even Mr Gladstone's Egyptian policy is not to be compared to it. By the formation of corps armed and drilled on the European model, the Chinese Government have acknowledged that the European military system is superior to their own, and yet they cannot make up their minds to introduce it save and except in districts where there is a supposed danger of attack either from foreign or domestic enemies. Directly we get away from the coast, and from provinces where loyalty sits lightly on the consciences of the people, we find rifles exchanged for bows and arrows, and Krupp guns for venerable and useless ordnance. And not only do the authorities not attempt to conceal this fact, but they appear to be unconscious of the ridiculous contrast between the European organisation and tactics and the native system which they profess to be anxious to exchange for them. With unblushing cynicism they publish, side by side, in the '*Peking Gazette*,' reports on the value of foreign arms, and the advantages reaped in the field from the steadiness imparted to the men by foreign drill, with the most grotesque accounts of the absurd evolutions and accomplishments of their native army.

What, by way of example, can be more hopelessly ridiculous than the following reports made by the Governor of Shantung and the Director-General of the Yellow River Works respectively?—

"In the inspection of the regular forces," writes the first official, "great care was taken to guard against trickery, both as regards

the size and the distancing of the targets used for archery and match-lock practice. The performances of the soldiery were found worthy of high commendation, as well in shield and spear practice as in posturing, tight-rope dancing, and other military exploits."

It would have been difficult to find a parallel to this most lame and impotent conclusion, had not a right reverend prelate supplied one in a celebrated charge, in which he warned his clergy against the practice of "dancing, card-playing, and other athletic exercises." The Director-General, however, is plainly quite ready to follow suit, and is, as we gather from his report of an inspection of the four battalions under his orders, entirely at one with the Governor on the subject of military tactics.

"This force," he says, "which is stationed at and near Tsi-ning Chow, in Shantung, numbers at present, after the reductions made, 1613 men and 49 officers. The performance of the soldiery in evolutions, gingall, spear, shield, and archery practice, and in turning warlike somersaults, was of the most satisfactory description."

Truly soldiers who can play "such fantastic tricks before high heaven" must make not only angels, but their truest friends, weep in despair of their ever being able to hold their own in the field of battle.

So far as outward appearances go, the changes lately introduced into the Chinese navy are far greater than those effected in the land forces. The outward aspect of the soldier is the same now as ever, the only difference being in the weapons he carries; but in the navy *all* is changed. The old-fashioned war-junk, with its high sides, flat bottom, square stern, cumbrous rudder, and mat sails, is a thing of

the past; and in place thereof, trim ironclads, gunboats, and torpedo-vessels patrol the seas. Altogether, China now possesses a foreign-built fleet of some eighty vessels. Of these, a few, which were built at Stettin and in England, are constructed on the latest and most approved models; while those launched from the yards at Foo-chow, Shanghai, and Nanking, though not quite so formidable, might still prove no despicable antagonists. Of those of English build, two carry 7 guns, two 6 guns, two 4 guns, two 3 guns, one 2 guns, and one 1 gun. Besides these are the eight gunboats built by Sir William Armstrong, and named after the first eight letters of the Greek alphabet, two of which carry a 26½-ton gun apiece, and the others a 38-ton gun each. Of the native-built ships, two carry 26 guns, one carries 9 guns and 2 howitzers, nine carry 7 guns, nine 5 guns, and the remainder smaller armaments.

This list makes a formidable array, and if all the vessels were as well manned as they are armed, they should be a sufficient protection for the seaboard of the empire. But as in the case of the army, the navy is unequally efficient. The system which leaves to the control of each provincial viceroy the forces within his jurisdiction, ensures diversity of administration, and necessarily entails varied degrees of organisation. In some provinces where foreign instructors have been engaged, and schools of navigation established, as at Foo-chow, the ships are well kept, and the crews well drilled; but in other districts, notably in Canton, where the people in their foolish conceit refuse to invite the help of European officers, the condition of the fleet is exactly the reverse, and instead of adding to the strength of

the empire, they diminish from it to the extent of the large sums which have been expended on the purchase of the ships and their armaments. An ill-kept, imperfectly-provided, and badly-manned gunboat is no more effective than a war-junk, and so the Chinese will find out if the dogs of war should be let loose.

When, in the engagement at the Peiho in 1860, the Chinese succeeded in capturing a gunboat, they determined to turn their prize to account. Having, with this intention, lit the fires, and produced the amount of smoke from the funnel which they had been accustomed to see, they expected the vessel to move, and were much astonished to find that it remained motionless. We fear that this is but an illustration of the condition of the bulk of the land and sea forces at the present time. They have the best weapons, ships, and armaments procurable, but they do not know how to use them. The mandarins labour under the delusion that European soldiers and sailors are, man for man, no better than their own defenders; and they believe that the possession of equally good arms would, in any future war, turn the scale in favour of their own overwhelmingly large battalions. They entirely ignore the fact that the success of the weapon depends on the power and the will of the soldier to turn it to the

best account. Only lately we have seen Egyptian soldiers armed with rifles slaughtered like sheep by savages carrying only spears. We do not believe that Chinese soldiers would ever present so abject a picture of cowardice as these Egyptian troops did at Teb; for though they are not men likely "to snatch bright honour from the pale-faced moon," they are by no means devoid of courage, and have shown on occasions that they can fight bravely and with determination. But the Chinese have no liking for the profession of arms. They despise it, and regard their soldiers as inferior beings, and as being fit only to be food for powder. It is obvious, therefore, that a complete change must come over the national mind on this subject before the necessary radical reforms in the army can be thoroughly carried out. But this is not the only direction in which there must first be a complete change of front. The iron of reform must enter deeply into the whole corporate life of the empire; the public service must be chastened and purified; the laws must be justly administered; and the egregious folly of despising everything which is not Chinese must be given up,—before China will ever be able to place an army in the field which will face the foe with the strength and steadiness of trained soldiers.

THE GOVERNMENT MEDICAL BILL: A RADICAL CURE.

"MEN are never so likely," wrote Macaulay half a century ago, "to settle a question rightly as when they discuss it freely." If this be true, as we feel assured it is, of questions relating to general politics, how much more does it hold good in respect to those of a highly technical kind, such as are involved in the proposals of the Government Bill for the Amendment of the Medical Act which is now before Parliament? Yet we do not hesitate to say that the statement of the Earl of Milltown, in the House of Lords, to the effect that the medical profession are in blissful ignorance of the provisions of this Bill, was not in the least exaggerated. From information which has reached us, there appears to be something like a conspiracy of silence on the part of some of the more prominent organs of professional opinion in London as to the defects of the Bill, and the probable results of its provisions upon the organisation of the medical profession, if passed. We have before us an eight-page circular, issued by a committee of members of the British Medical Association, formed to protest against the suppression of some dozens of letters adverse to the Bill, which had been addressed to the 'Journal' of the Association by its members. Again, at a recent meeting of the Medical Council, it was suggested that as the medical journals only reported as much of the discussions on the Medical Bill as suited their purpose, it might be necessary to have an official report of the character of 'Hansard.' There is also a general impression abroad that some of the leading professional journals, on whose support medical

men are accustomed to rely when their interests as a body are threatened, have done their best to suppress all arguments that would tell seriously against the Bill. If this is so, then we cannot think they are doing a wise or a fair thing in shutting out the expression of honest differences of opinion. It is not a wise thing, because the more fully their readers trust them now, and accept their unmitigated praises of the Bill, the greater will be the disappointment and resentment if, when it is too late, and the Bill has become an Act, it be found that even one-half the evils foretold in their suppressed correspondence follow in its train. We make no apology, therefore, for again drawing attention to a Bill whose radical tendencies and mode of dealing with the established institutions of the country have been so little noticed in the House of Lords, that the conversations which took place on the occasions of its passing through its stages there, have been mainly occupied with the comparatively unimportant subject of how many or how few representatives on the new Medical Boards should be assigned to the University or College in which each noble lord who spoke happened to be interested.

Since our former article appeared ('Blackwood's Magazine' for March), the College of Surgeons in Ireland has sent a deputation to the Lord Lieutenant to oppose the passing of the Bill. The Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of Edinburgh, conjointly with the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, have petitioned against it, on the ground that it

strikes at their chartered privileges in connection with the granting of licences to practise; that the constitution proposed for the General Medical Council is objectionable; that the admission of university students to the final examination at a lower fee than non-university students is unfair; and that the provisions for admitting foreign and colonial practitioners require amendment,—all which points, it will be remembered, were referred to in our article. The Royal College of Surgeons of England, also, at a remarkable meeting of its Fellows and members, held in March, most unequivocally condemned the Bill by passing a resolution avowedly designed to cut the ground from under the feet of its defenders, on the very point on which medical leader-writers have hitherto been constantly assuring us that the whole profession was in favour of its provisions—viz., the part relating to the Conjoint-Board scheme.

Lest it should be supposed, as it has been, that the *genius loci* of the great medical centre where this Magazine is published affects the tone of our articles on this subject, and that it is only in Scotland that this Bill is looked on with aversion by the medical profession, let us briefly state the circumstances under which this meeting was held, and the above resolution passed, giving at the same time a few facts in the history of those English medical bodies which are to be disestablished and disendowed if the Government Bill become law.

No medical body in the United Kingdom has had a more important influence on medical educa-

tion during the present century than the English College of Surgeons, and none, we unhesitatingly add, has on the whole exercised that influence more completely for the general good. Originally united with the barbers (a relic of which union may be seen in the pole which adorns the front of barbers' shops to the present time, representing the pole to which the arm of patients about to be bled used to be tied), the College has, since its final severance from that fraternity in the time of George II., and obtaining its charter in 1800, become the principal examining body for English practitioners, 16,000 of whom hold its diploma of membership at the present time. No one seriously contends that these diplomas are granted without sufficient examination to practically test the abilities of candidates, nor has any charge ever been brought against the College of selling its diplomas for a mere monetary consideration. The average rejections at the College examinations, moreover, though lower than those before some of the other examining bodies, are, as will be seen from a table recently prepared for the Medical Council, and given in a footnote,¹ fully equal to that of the average of all the principal examining bodies taken together. The names of Sir James Paget, Sir Joseph Lister, and Sir Spencer Wells upon its governing body, show that the highest surgical talent in the profession is still attracted to the College, and takes part in its deliberations; while the experience of the best modes of examination, accumulated during its

¹ Proportion of rejections at examinations at Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in 1883: London Coll. Phys., 30 per cent; K. and Q. Coll. Phys., Irel., 22 per cent; Edin. Coll. Phys., 29.3 per cent; Lond. Coll. Surg., 36 per cent; Edin. Coll. Surg., 47 per cent; Dublin Coll. Surg., 25 per cent; Conjoint Board Phys. and Surg., Edin., 47 per cent; Conjoint Board Phys., Edin., and Faculty, Glasg., 42 per cent; Faculty of Phys. and Surg., Glasgow, 43 per cent. Average of all, 35 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent.

long existence as a licensing body, and the prestige attaching to its diplomas, are such as no brand-new examining body could possibly hope to rival for a long time to come. In short, the College is probably in a better position for carrying on the work of examinations than it has ever been at any previous period of its history. The meeting held in March last was for the consideration of some proposed changes in the College charters, and for some weeks previously the 'Lancet' had taken great pains to stir up ill-feeling against the College authorities. The Council of the College, on their part, have recently shown a most conciliatory disposition; and if they expected to meet with any very adverse criticism at the meeting, they must have been most agreeably disappointed. They asked for power to increase the amount of property in land or rents to be held by the College from £2000 to £10,000, and they were urged by the meeting to take power to hold £20,000. Their other proposals were all carried; and the resolution to which we have alluded was brought forward by independent members, and carried, with the avowed object, as we have said, of preserving to the College its rights and privileges, which the Bill before Parliament, as was pointed out, seriously threatened. Such is the great institution, strong in the attachment of its Fellows and members, which the radical reformers of the day would ruthlessly destroy!

Second only to the College of Surgeons in its practical influence upon medical education in England, but taking precedence of it in dignity and social importance,

the London College of Physicians has a history of which its *alumni* may well be proud. Instituted by Henry VIII. at the request of Linacre, its establishment was the first step towards a separation of medicine from theology, with which it had been intimately united during the dark and middle ages, to the great disadvantage of both. It is true that in the Act of Parliament establishing the College (3 Henry VIII. cap. 11) the clerical element is so far retained that it is provided that no one shall practise as a physician or surgeon in London, or within seven miles thereof, unless he has been examined and approved by the Bishop of London or the Dean of St Paul's, with the aid of four doctors of physic—and for surgery, of expert persons in that Faculty; nor in the country, unless in the same way examined by the bishop of the diocese or his vicar-general, calling to their aid such experts as they thought expedient.¹ But when, a few years later, the College came to Parliament to get confirmed to them the privileges bestowed upon them in the meantime by the king, the bishops and dean were quietly dropped out, and the College became incorporated as a distinctly medical body, extending its powers over practitioners all through England, with the exception, as before, of graduates of Oxford and Cambridge.

It is hardly too much to say that all the great advancements in medical science date from that complete separation between the clerical and the medical professions. For hundreds of years previously, during which medicine had been studied in the universities, the same erroneous dogmas had been

¹ A survival of the old connection which has reached our times is found in the right of the Archbishop of Canterbury to grant the degree of M.D., which was recognised by the Medical Act of 1858.

handed down unquestioned from one generation of medical monks to another,—the same belief in the power of magic and charms, half heathen, half Christian,¹ to cure disease—the same figments about the influence of Mars and Venus over the human body, of lucky and unlucky months,² days, or hours, according to the position of the stars, passed current for medical knowledge amongst the most eminent practitioners of the day.

Chaucer's description of the "veray parfait practisour" of his time would have needed very slight alteration in order to fit Dr Butts—

"In all this world ne was there none
him like,

To speak of physic and of surgery,
For he was groundd in astronomy.
He kept his patient a full great deal
In houres by his magic natural."

Magic and astrology, the unquestioned authority of Galen and Hippocrates, lasted as long as the study of medicine was confined to universities, where the idols of the school reigned supreme. Nor is it difficult to account for the admixture of astrological rubbish with medical studies, in which it would now seem so out of place. Down to the time of Harvey, it was believed that there was no circulation of the blood in the sense in which we now understand it, but that there was instead a perpetual flux and reflux between the arteries and veins, an ebbing and a flowing tide—a tide influenced by the same causes as govern the tides of ocean; and hence, even in ordinary functions of the

body, the aspect of the moon, the conjunction of the stars, controlled, or at least modified, them all. It was not from the professorial chair of any of the ancient universities, but as the Reader of Anatomy in the College of Physicians, that Harvey demonstrated the absurdity of this belief, by showing that the current of blood in no way resembled an ebbing and flowing tide, but was in fact the ceaseless current of an onward rushing river.

Like Harvey's, the names of Sydenham, Jenner, and Bright are inseparably connected with the College of Physicians, and shed a lustre on it from former times not inferior to that which is at present conferred by the living Jenners, the Gulls, the Clifford Allbutts, and the Hughlings Jacksons who now adorn its ranks, preside over its deliberations, or lecture in its hall. It may well be doubted, however, whether, if the powers conferred on the College by previous legislation were taken away, as proposed in this Bill, the loss to the public would not be more felt as regards its numerous licentiates who practise in country towns and villages throughout the length and breadth of England—those unknown Lydgates who, though lacking a master-hand to paint their lives, lack none of Lydgate's devotion to his profession in its scientific and remedial aspects. These form in themselves the best answer to the charge of those who say that the College has but little sympathy with the active work of the profession, and who look complacently on the probability of its being shortly deprived of the privileges

¹ "Strangely visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers."—SHAKESPEARE.

² "Our doctors say this is no month to bleed."—*Ibid.*

and duties which yet remain to it.¹ We know what these licentiates have been and are; but as for those who, under the Government Bill, will not necessarily have either licence or diploma, who will acknowledge neither university nor college as their *alma mater*, we have but slender materials for forming even a conjecture. We are asked in this matter to take a leap in the dark; and looking to the issues of life or death which may hang upon the result, we prefer most respectfully to decline.

In saying this, we by no means intend it to be supposed that we think these colleges, much as we admire their work in the present and in the past, have reached such a point of development—or, to use the fashionable phrase, of evolution—as precludes any further progress; or that there is no real grievance to be redressed as regards students of medicine in England, who, having studied at the most famous London medical schools, for instance, have to apply to the three separate establishments in Pall Mall, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Blackfriars, for as many certificates of fitness to practise their profession. What we do object to is, that the cure proposed for this state of things is very much worse than the disease. It is like cutting a man's head off to cure him of the toothache, or like amputating a limb on account of some disease in one of the joints, which a more conservative surgery would succeed in saving. The remedy for the practical inconvenience caused by the present system appears to us to be a very simple one. It is merely the carrying out of a provision in the Medical Act of 1858, enabling the colleges in each division of the kingdom to unite in holding their ex-

aminations for diplomas; and it may perhaps surprise our readers to learn that three separate Acts of Parliament have been passed to enable as many English medical bodies to carry out this suggestion, which has yet in England never been carried out. The resolution passed at the College of Surgeons in March in favour of such a union, shows what might have been done by the Medical Council, had it been in earnest upon the subject, any time during the last twenty-five years, and leaves no doubt as to what would have been done had the Council been really representative of the whole profession, and not merely of the little cliques and coteries by which its members are, up to the present time, elected. Should any difficulty with regard to details prove insurmountable by the colleges, or the gentle pressure of the Medical Council prove unavailing (which we do not believe), then the clause recommended by Professor Huxley, refusing registration to single diplomas would meet the case and bring about the desired union.

The Apothecaries' Society, strange to say, is the only English corporation which would not suffer pecuniarily by the passing of the Government Bill. If we are rightly informed, the expenses attending its examinations are greater than can be covered by the fees paid for its diplomas, so that, as far as the mere trading body of which its members form a part goes, it might very well rejoice at being permitted to sell its drugs and dispense its prescriptions without a continuance of the trouble and expense of acting as a medical licensing body; nor should it be overlooked that the object of granting to it the powers and

¹ See the 'Lancet' of April 5, 1884, p. 629.

privileges conferred by its Act of 1815, has been to a great extent defeated, very few of the licentiates of this Society now condescending to keep shops. In a few years, if the radical programme contained in the Government Bill be carried out, not only will the part of the apothecary in 'Romeo and Juliet,' in the 'Canterbury Tales,' and in the 'Médecin malgré lui,' have become to English readers matters for antiquarian research, but what is of infinitely more importance to the public, the pharmaceutical chemists, without any medical training whatever, will have stepped into the place designed by Parliament for the qualified apothecary. If the Society, therefore, is not prepared for its own utter effacement as a medical body, it will do wisely to seek alliance with the body which even now begins to occupy its former place—the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

Since no one who is acquainted with the subject doubts that a voluntary union between the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons would, in England at all events, produce the good effects which can be expected from the elaborate organisation proposed in the Bill, without any of its serious inconveniences, and since the same course might be taken in the other divisions of the kingdom,¹ the only subject urgently demanding legislation appears to us to be the constitution and powers of the Medical Council, the central body to which was committed, under the Act of 1858, the duty of carrying out the provisions of that Act, and of supervising generally the courses of medical education and

examinations. The failure of this body to carry out the objects for which it was constituted has long been notorious, and has been attributed by friendly critics to the insufficient powers given it—by neutral or unfriendly ones, to its defective constitution. The Report of the Royal Commission, on which the Government Bill is ostensibly founded, thus alludes to this subject:—

"It has indeed been urged, that in visitation of the examinations of the medical authorities the Council has done comparatively little, and that, though inefficient examinations exist, the power of representation to the Privy Council has not been used. Whether the Council has in these respects done all that might have been done, appears open to question. It is not, however, difficult to discern causes which may probably have influenced the Council: the expense of conducting frequent and systematic inquiries; the great power of the individual medical authorities, of which most send a representative to the Council itself; the desire to persuade rather than to compel; and also the constant expectation of further legislation."—Report, p. 5.

Qui s'excuse, s'accuse, and any one who will take the trouble to read through this Report, and the evidence on which it is founded, will find that the weakness of the Medical Council has been the *fons et origo* of the evil whose consequences it is now proposed to visit upon the licensing bodies. The Medical Council has never succeeded in gaining the confidence of the profession, and has never, therefore, been able to speak with the authority it was designed to have. It has been composed of very able men, men of the highest

¹ Preparations have already been made in Scotland for such a union between the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of Edinburgh, and the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow; and it is said the Irish bodies are ready to join in a similar scheme.

social and professional standing, men whose opinions outside the Council chamber justly carried great weight. Yet its discussions and decisions have more often been ridiculed than respected. The Royal Commissioners, recognising the desirability of obtaining the full and complete confidence of the medical profession in the constitution of the Council, recommended that the system of direct representation should be adopted, so as "to give the general practitioner an effective voice in the body, which will be the principal authority of the medical profession." Let us see how far these facts and recommendations have been kept in view by the framers of the present Bill.

In the first place, by the provisions establishing a Medical Board in each division of the kingdom, the centre of gravity is to be shifted from the Medical Council to these new Boards, in the composition of which the general practitioner would have no voice whatever, either effective or non-effective. The struggle for additional seats made during the passage of the Bill through the Lords has accordingly been, not for those in the Council but on the Boards; and the immense importance attached to a due balance of power on those bodies, as between the universities and corporations, may be understood by Lord Carlingford's latest endeavour to hold the balance evenly between the Irish medical authorities, when, having granted three instead of two representatives on the Irish Board to the King and Queen's College of Physicians, he added an additional half representative each to the University of Dublin and Royal University of Ireland! If the Royal Commissioners were right, therefore, in attributing the failure of the Medical Council to "the

great power of the medical authorities, of which most send a representative to the Council," what can be expected from the new Boards, which are to be wholly composed of such representatives, without the admixture of any Crown nominees, but an even more ignominious failure?

Then as to the expense of conducting frequent and systematic inquiries. Hitherto such inquiries have been confined to the qualifying examinations held by the medical authorities; but under the Bill, it will become, in addition, the duty of each Medical Board in that part of the United Kingdom to which it belongs, "to ascertain, by inspection or otherwise, the sufficiency of the education provided by any schools for the time being declared by any scheme of such Board to be recognised medical schools." As there are in London alone at least eleven medical schools which would have to be inspected under this provision, it is a moderate computation to put down that this, if done at all extensively by the new Boards, would cost at least ten times the amount spent on visitations of examinations by the Medical Council in any single year! As if this were not enough, the Medical Council itself is also to have power of inquiry, by visitation or otherwise, into the sufficiency of any final or other examinations conducted or recognised under the Act, including those to be established by the new Boards. Surely such a complicated and expensive apparatus as this would prove, was never yet devised by the wit of man for the affliction of any profession!

The plan which we would propose for dealing with the Medical Council, has at least the merit of simplicity. We would allow it to remain the principal authority of the profession. We would estab-

lish no rival Boards to compete with it. We would no longer endanger its success by continuing those sources of weakness in its constitution which the Report of the Royal Commission has made manifest. We would give the general practitioner a really effective voice in the body which governs his profession. In short, we would recognise but two parties as having a right to be represented on the Council; the State, which clothes it with authority—and the medical profession at large, which pays all its expenses. To a Council of eighteen, composed of Crown nominees and direct representatives of the profession in equal proportions, we would give, if necessary, enlarged powers. We would refer to it such questions as those of the registration of colonial and foreign practitioners, and of medical titles, to be dealt with subject to the approval of the Privy Council; we would authorise it, subject to the same approval, to insist upon the carrying out of the provisions of the Medical Act of 1858, particularly as regards Conjoint Boards of Examination in each division of the kingdom, and the prosecution of offenders against the Act; we would even permit it to express its opinion as to any proposed medical legislation on matters over which it exercised control, instead of treating it with the discourtesy and neglect which the present Government has thought it necessary to show to the Council, and of which complaint was made at its last meeting; nay, we would go further, and arrange that once in ten years the Medical Council should report to the Privy Council what changes in the law had become, in its opinion, desirable. We would authorise the new Council to require that the medical examining bodies which accept the certificates in the

schools, should satisfy themselves in every case of the sufficiency and quality of the instruction given, grave doubt being cast upon this by the fact that of students sent up to examination after a full curriculum in the schools, from one-third to nearly one-half annually fail to pass. As the expenses of the smaller Council we propose would be considerably less than at present, more funds would be available for its most important function—the visitation of final examinations; and thus, without endangering the stability of any time-honoured and useful institutions, endeared to the profession by noble associations and great names inseparably connected with them, a strong central body would be constituted, which might reasonably hope to secure a greater respect for its decisions than has yet been shown for those of its predecessor in office.

We do not for a moment suppose that this simple solution of a question requiring a good deal of attention in order to understand all its complications, will meet with any favour from those who have pledged themselves to support the Government Bill, as some whom we could mention have done, without in the least understanding what it contains; nor yet from those who appear to imagine, like the tyrannical ruler of whom Livy tells us, that the secret of governing well consists in cutting off the heads of all the tallest poppies in the garden; but to those who desire to see the uninterrupted progress of a profession in which all are more or less interested, and who are not particularly enamoured of Radical methods of dealing with the institutions of the country, we commend for consideration what is, we venture to think, a more excellent way.

FANATICISM IN THE SOUDAN.

In the September number of 'Maga,' 1882, a paper will be found which describes the state of Moslem feeling, and their expectations of an approaching triumph of the faith at the time of the Egyptian war. In this paper the writer ventured to suggest the probability that the figure of the Mahdi might become an important one in the history of the Levant, and referred to the first victory of the Soudani prophet, which had hardly at the time attracted that amount of general attention which we now see it to have deserved.

Nor can it be considered unnatural that in our own age and country civilised society should long remain sceptical concerning the power of religious movements among unarmed and almost savage races, especially when the regions concerned are those in which the benefits of civilisation and the power of Western warlike resources could not fail to be well known. That prophets should arise close to lands where Mr Cook's tourist is a familiar figure, and religious wars be waged where the railroad and the steamer have already lost their novelty, does indeed seem at first improbable in the highest degree. Nor is it less astonishing that in a sceptical age, and within reach of the telegraph and the diplomatic agent, the policies and intrigues of great nations should suddenly be swept aside, and the attention of Europe concentrated on a spectacle which is equally at least, if not more, appropriate to the times of the rise of Islam or the triumph of Christianity—the spectacle of a fighting race deeply imbued with faith in the pretensions of an inspired

leader, and confronted on the other hand by a man equally supported by strong religious belief, and equally indifferent, because of such conviction, to the opinion of the world or to the material dangers of his undertakings. Surely in the reply which is thus given to the philosophies and incredulities of our day, we see strong proof that faith yet remains, even in the nineteenth century, one of the most powerful motives of human conduct, not only amongst Arabs or Russians, but even among those nations which are accustomed to rely on the most matter-of-fact reason and the most material considerations.

The Mahdi, then, in spite of the warnings given by some who knew the East—in spite even of his destruction of General Hicks's army, and of the rapid advance of his vanguard on the road to Mecca—in spite of the forebodings uttered early in November in well-informed quarters,—remained to the Liberal party and to the Cabinet, if not to the nation, an object almost of contempt,—a "fanatic" who could be repressed in a moment by an English regiment, or persuaded by an unprotected emissary of England. It required the defeat of Baker Pasha to convince the Government, either that their overconfidence was fatal, or that they had been ill advised by their trusted agents in Egypt.

It is not intended here to repeat what has been already said concerning the character and influence of the Mahdi, and the expectations connected with his appearance. They will be found detailed in the paper already noticed. The object of the present article is to inquire how

we now stand in reference to the movement which we have undertaken to repress ; what are the true motives of the actors in the drama, what has already been done, and what remains to be accomplished.

General Gordon has described the condition of affairs produced by the victories of the Mahdi as a "fever," against which fortification was useless. This fever is by no means recent, nor has its power been confined to the Soudan alone, or to Egypt. It is a fever which has infected the Arab race, and which is mainly due to the decline of Turkish power and to the war of 1877. In Arabia, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, not less than in Egypt, vague hopes of freedom have been spreading for several years ; and the local troubles in Syria, not less than the revolt of Arabi and the consequent rising of the Soudan, are incidents only in an historic drama which as yet remains only half played out. How the future is to develop, and what will be the ultimate settlement of the Arab question, we have yet to see. The action of England, of France, of Russia, the resistance of Turkey, and many other influences, must be taken into account ; but when we reflect on the condition of Italy at the time of Garibaldi's rising, or on the triumph of the wild Arabs over the disciplined forces of Rome, we should be committing a great mistake if we failed to recognise among the Arab-speaking races those elements of popular disquiet which have so often in history been the harbingers of great historic changes.

One fact alone has perhaps been unexpected by those who have studied the condition of the Arab race—namely, the desperate and determined courage of the warriors who opposed General Graham. Recent experience had not tended

to give us a high opinion of the valour of the Bedawin. In the Egyptian campaign they took no serious part ; but, like the Arabs of Napoleon's time, they hovered between the contending parties and harassed each in turn. We now, however, see the Arab in earnest, and recognise what he can do at his best. The change is due partly to difference between the degraded tribes of the Delta and the finer Desert race—partly to the fact that the Egyptians under Arabi were as hateful (or perhaps more so) to the Bedawin as were the English invaders ; whereas in the present instance the tribes see on the one part the detested tyrant and the foreign infidel fighting side by side, and on the other success, freedom, spoil, or paradise—all dear to the hearts of the wild children of the wilderness.

No stronger test of faith could be proposed to man than that demanded by 'Othmân Digna when he called his soldiers to face the deadly hail of bullets and the cold hedge of bayonets ; but on the other hand, it is not only among wild Arabs that such faith is yet to be found. And no greater instance has been witnessed among us for many a year than that of the man who went forth so calmly and promptly on his errand of mercy in contempt of death, because of his hope that in him might be found the "saviour" foretold of old for Egypt (Isaiah xix. 20).

Let us look, then, for a moment at the motives which influence the Mahdi's followers and the chiefs who command them. They are probably two in all ; to the many, religious belief—to the few calculating leaders, freedom from subjection to Egypt, and immunity from any interference with the profits of the slave-trade. The ringleaders in the movement are thus doubly

guilty of the blood of their followers, because not only has it been shed in a hopeless resistance, but it has been shed for a cause which is not truly the cause which they have at heart.

Religion and trade profits are then the incitements which keep alive the movement, and in support of this view a few words may be devoted to each motive in turn. The romantic character of the Arab race is too well known to need more than a passing allusion. The power of Muhammad lay in great measure in the charm of his poetry; and the Anacreontic bards of Arabia were famous among their fellows long before his time. The imagination is excited by the wild landscape of the desert in a manner which the dweller in cultivated lands can little appreciate. The fancy of the Arab peoples the wilderness with ghostly and demoniac forms; and the silence which oppresses the mind in such vast solitudes, where the cry of the eagle or the bark of the jackal is re-echoed by the naked crags, can only be known by those who have wandered alone in such a region. Thus the ghoul, the *afreet*, the ghostly wild goat, under which form the demon appears to the hunter, are creations of the imagination ever present to the Arab mind. The tribes who love to tell the wondrous stories of Zîr and Jandabah, the fables of Lokman, and the songs of Antar, are men of character very different from the hopeless and timid peasants of the Delta. The Korân appeals to their imagination in a degree of which the *fellahin* are incapable; and its legends, its fine poetic images, its oft-repeated descriptions of paradise and of hell, its claim to be a "reading made plain in the Arab tongue" to unlettered men by an unlettered prophet, appeal to the Bedawi of

to-day, just as they appealed to his ancestor twelve centuries ago,

"Made fair to men is the love of pleasure, of women, and children, and stored talents of gold and silver, and steeds of mark, and flocks, and corn-fields. Such are the things of this world's life. But God! goodly is the home with Him. Shall you tell of better things than these prepared for those who fear God, in His presence? Theirs shall be gardens beside which the rivers flow, and in which they shall abide for ever; and wives of stainless purity; and acceptance with God. For God regardeth His servants."

This was the vision which was before the eyes of the men of Teb or of Temanieb, when they charged the British square.

"God is round about the unbelieving. The lightning blindeth their eyes: when it gleameth on them they walk on in it, but the darkness closeth on them, and they stand still." Such is the language of triumphant faith, which is dear to the Arabs of to-day as of old. Such words re-echoed from the camp of Arabi, when, nightly, he assumed the green turban and the flowing robes of a *sherîf* as the faithful gathered round him, and the derwish prayed, and the cymbal girl clashed a chorus in the intervals.

Such faith is not, however, what we mean when we speak of the brave warriors of the Soudan as fanatics. It is fierce hate of the Christian, and the desire of exterminating the non-Moslem, which at times disfigure the lofty character of their religious fervour. However much we may admire their courage and devotion, we must not forget that neither the Arab of to-day, nor the Arab of Muhammad's day, was more than a barbarian, deeply imbued with

superstitions of the most primitive character, scarcely superior in many ways to the savages of South Africa or America, untamable and unimprovable as are most of the older uncivilised races of the world.

Were religious conviction the only cause of the brave charges which General Graham's troops withstood, we should have nothing to say in defence of the recent campaign. Have we not sent against the Mahdi a man who, as all his friends well know, is actuated not by personal motives or by ambition, but by the conviction that he is an instrument for the fulfilment of ancient prophecies? The politician and the soldier are thus bidden to stand aside that the prophet may be met by one who, in zeal, in faith, and in sincerity, is able to vie with him even among his own people.

"I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians." "The spirit of Egypt shall fail." "In that day Egypt shall be like women; it shall be afraid, and fear. . . And He shall send them a saviour—a great one,—and he shall deliver them." Such are the words which are ever echoing in the mind of Gordon, and in them is found the main motive of his actions. What those actions are, it would be unfair to say before we really know the circumstances; and how far success is possible, only those on the spot can rightly judge.

But lest it should appear that a false comparison has been suggested between the motives of General Gordon and his antagonists, we must here pause to note the true basis of the confidence which inspired the brave savages who charged to certain death. We hear that charms, said to have been blessed by the Mahdi, were distributed among them, and guaranteed

by the chiefs to be a certain protection against the bullets of the enemy. There can be little doubt that the fury of the Arab onslaught was in great measure due not to the hope of Paradise so much as to the sense of immunity from ordinary danger. 'Othmân Digna's followers were naturally inclined to place complete reliance on supernatural powers, conveyed to them through the medium of charms from the holy leader, to whom Divine favour could not have granted lesser powers than those generally believed to be enjoyed by the derwish initiated.

General Graham's victories have thus had several important results. In the first place, the tide of revolution has been rolled back along the most dangerous line of advance—namely, that on Mecca, through Suakim—the line whereby a triumphant Mahdi would be expected to proceed to the Holy City of Islam. In the second place, the death of some 6000 warriors represents, at the ratio of density for population in the desert, the depopulation of some 3000 square miles of country. Whether or not the spirit of the race be broken is, for the moment, a secondary consideration, for without doubt, the two battles have shorn of fighting men a very large area of country east of Berber. Thirdly, the Arabs have discovered that, even when fighting under the direct lead of 'Othmân, they have no supernatural immunity from wounds and death, and no certainty of victory, because of the sanctity of their cause. In the vicinity of Suakim we may now pause with safety to allow these bitter lessons to sink into the minds of our gallant and simple foes.

'Othmân Digna has, we hear, been compelled to argue that even Muhammad was defeated, and that

prophets foretell a long struggle preceding final victory. Whether he is sincere himself in such belief, we cannot at present judge. He certainly is not blinded by faith to a sense of personal security. Like Muhammad at Bedr, he viewed the battle from a height; but he failed to follow the example of the great founder of Islam, who, when his followers gave way, descended from his prayer platform to charge on his horse—throwing in the air a handful of dust at the infidels.

True, Muhammad was repulsed in 623 A.D. at Mount Ohud, near Medina, but the number of men he then lost was only seventy in all; and the mighty slaughter of Temanieb is only equalled in the history of the early wars of Islam by the Moslem loss at the Yermûk, when 4000 of the faithful fell. This last battle was, however, a victory, not a defeat; and the rout of the Roman levies, surprised by Khaled's wondrous march from the Euphrates to Gilead, was the real crisis which determined the triumph of Islam throughout the East. At Temanieb, England was able, fortunately, to count on her own legions, not (as in the case of Rome) on native mercenaries; and in General Graham she possessed a leader not unfitted to meet the forces of Islam. The confidence inspired by the calm voice, the slow deliberate manner, the commanding figure, of this kindly Scottish leader, inspired those feelings which are not always felt when generals who telegraph brilliant despatches, and who live alone as superior beings, are playing their part before a British public rather than striving to "do the work thoroughly"—as General Graham prides himself in doing.

Our eyes are therefore now turned to Khartûm rather than to Suakim—to the dangers to which

General Gordon is exposed from Zebeir and the slave-traders, from intrigue, violence, and fanaticism; and the slave question is becoming yet more important an element than formerly in the ultimate settlement of that long and arduous struggle on which we are now probably only beginning to enter.

How many and how varied are the dangers (including not possibly those caused by his own actions), the recent short messages from Khartûm allow us in some measure to judge. That General Gordon depended upon the arrival of British troops is now past doubt, though his grounds for the expectation are not known. It is to be feared, however, that this hope may have induced him to remain where he is till retreat has become impossible and succour trebly difficult. It was from Suakim, apparently, that the advance of an English force was expected; and perhaps it may be conjectured that but for the delays which occurred, and the increasing heat, General Graham would, as Gordon expected, have been ordered to march to Berber immediately after his last victory.

General Gordon has himself confessed how ingrained in the nature of the races with which he deals is the idea of slavery as a natural law. Among many indications of the low standard of civilisation which obtained among the Arabs of Muhammad's day, and which was consequently sanctioned by the Korân, the references to slavery may be counted. The Prophet speaks of the blood-feud as a sacred duty. He condemns the thief to lose his right hand, and the faithless wife to be immured alive; and of slaves the Korân says most naively, in comparing them with their masters, "Shall they be held equal? No: praise be to God."

Although the first converts to Islam were mostly slaves, and although the freeing of those who had done aught worthy of such reward was inculcated as a pious deed, the Korân contemplates as the only natural condition of society one in which slaves, even if professing the faith, are to remain in bondage to Arab freemen.

Slavery, then, is no crime to a Moslem, but a usage sanctioned by religion and by immemorial custom. Not only in Cairo, in Damascus, or in Stamboul, are slaves still to be found numerous, but throughout Arabia, and among the wild tribes of the Syrian desert, all powerful sheikhs take pride in the numbers and valour of negro bondsmen. The polite pasha will inform the visitor that slavery no longer exists in the Turkish empire, and that such slaves as remain are merely domestic servants; but if you have a friend who knows the city—whether it be Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus, or any other Arab town—he will take you to the quiet street, where, behind the minaret of a modest mosque, you step suddenly into the court of the great barrack, which is the slave-market of the district. Here, in a little mud-walled room, you may see the poor Nubian woman sitting, often with a black child in her arms, and her cheeks scored with the slave-master's mark of ownership. In another part of the building, delicate Circassians will fly as you approach to inner chambers, and stalwart Abyssinians or thickset negroes await a purchaser as porters or household servants. Greek slave-women have ceased to fill the harems of Cairo, it is true; but a Galla slave-wife, bought for £10 or £20, is probably as much (or as little) esteemed as ever. The great stream of human cattle is driven continually from Africa,

across the Red Sea to Mecca, and through Syria to Baghdad and Asia Minor: the market which we are told to close is the whole Turkish empire, and the Arabian continent from sea to sea.

As to the condition of these slaves, it must be confessed that it is often quite equal to that which they would enjoy were they free. The rich Moslem master is often pious and kindly, and often afraid of the immediate consequences of violence. The Korân inculcates on him the greatest consideration for such of his women-slaves as have borne him children; and the amount of work expected from the slaves of Asia is light compared with that which freemen accomplish in Europe. But, on the other hand, there is no security, and no choice for the slave, and fearful crimes often occur in consequence. If, however, the task which we set before us is the suppression of slavery among those Moslems who come under our influence, let us at least clearly appreciate the magnitude of the work which we shall have to undertake.

The religious element has perhaps as yet been the more dangerous of the two; but the slave question will remain as a real motive long after the Mahdi has been discredited by defeat, and the zeal of the credulous victims of his preaching has cooled or been extinguished; and there is no subject connected with the Soudan that will more exercise the ingenuity of British statesmen to deal with in a satisfactory manner.

What has been done as yet, has been the disillusionment of some of the religious enthusiasts of the Soudan, and the manifestation of British power; but that which remains to be done is far more arduous. Were she but firmly established in Egypt, England

would become the natural protector of the whole Arab race, and might witness, unmoved, the gradual decay of Turkish authority in Arab-speaking lands. The Arabs surround the Indian route on all sides; and the possessor of Cairo has a most important influence on Mecca. The size of Egypt proper is scarcely greater than the island of Cyprus; and it is indisputable that, with able administration, such as is available in the Indian department of Public Works, the whole Delta would become one of the richest and most prosperous of oriental lands. Only one word seems wanted to secure that steady hold on the situation which can alone lead to a successful outcome. What hinders that this word is not spoken? Protect Egypt, and the Soudan question becomes no more difficult than the management of our Indian frontiers. Fanaticism may blaze up for a brief time, but the Prophet has pronounced no condemnation against Christians, so long as they are guided by the commands of their own religion. If we are to fight hand in hand with the oppressor against the freedom of the Arab, we shall earn undying hatred; but our natural position is that of lords of Egypt in friendly alliance with the independent tribes of all the surrounding deserts. Such views are premature perhaps, and may fail to find acceptance as they did during a former crisis; but through the indecisions and vacillations of the present Administration, it can hardly be doubted that we are advancing inevitably to such a solution of the puzzle; and

we may yet hope that a time is in store for us when, securely posted in Cyprus and in Cairo, commanding from both sides our route to India, and allied to the warlike races of Arabia and Africa, we may calmly await the final catastrophe of the fall of Turkey, for which, however much we may regret its occurrence, we cannot now be held responsible. If such be indeed the future, it will not be to the man who bombarded Alexandria, who caused the death of two thousand peasants at Tel-el-Kebir, who allowed Hicks Pasha to protest in vain, who deserted Sinkât and Tokâr, who depopulated the Eastern Soudan, roused to revolution by the fatal initial error of his own policy, that the credit of success will be due. Those who allowed the adherents of Arabi—the grey-haired men who were chained in gangs, in order to be transported to the Soudan—to go forth to certain death against the wishes of their English leader, are reaping a bitter return for hypocrisy and deceit; and should it prove that, last but not least, the Ministry have abandoned to his fate the man who so generously risked life and reputation to save them, we doubt not that the wrath of England awaits them as a certain punishment. It will be the statesman who planted our flag in Cyprus, who acquired an interest for us in the Suez Canal, and who would, had he been spared, have given us a real route to India by the Persian Gulf, who will be remembered as the benefactor of his country, and the friend of peace.

FALLEN BRITAIN AND HER POLITICS.

FAILURE and loss of reputation are naturally galling: more especially do they afflict when the sufferer is conscious that they are owing to his own vanity, perversity, or feebleness of mind. He can look back, perhaps, and see that he was once prosperous and in a good name. He could not be content therewith, but must be trying dangerous experiments in the hope of reaching a still higher level of well-being. He has tampered with his possessions, rashly staked his self-respect and the respect of others; he has so wildly directed all his undertakings that he could bring none to a good issue; and his reverses are embittered by the thought of his indiscretion. Abased and repentant, he is ready to reproach himself in the words of the old legend, "*Stavo bene, per star meglio sto qui.*"

Such a one, it may be, has weakly yielded himself to the influence of insidious tongues, not caring to use his prudence or his good sense in his own defence. He has had some wrong, but he himself has been his greatest enemy. The sympathy of his fellows cannot be for him as if his reverses had been heaven-sent. He knows the adverse judgment of him which is in his neighbour's mind, even at times when society is peaceful and no man wishes to give prominence to his descent in the world: should strife or emulation arise in which he is concerned, he is soon made to feel the cooled sentiment of his community towards him. His faults, his follies, his indiscreet behaviour, are ruthlessly dragged into daylight; he is reproached therewith, and from his past doings a low esti-

mate is formed of his present condition, and the cruellest prophecies are indulged in as to how he may act in the future. Not only has he suffered in his worldly estate, but the credit and respect which once were accorded to him have disappeared.

He is conscious, possibly, of no evil intention. Careless and thoughtless he may have been, and too easily led by injudicious or designing persons. But he had never meant to wrong any one. When he was yielding up his rights to threats and clamour, he was made to believe that he was carrying out the highest rules of ethics; when he unresistingly endured a beating from his enemies, he did so because peace is the greatest of objects; he deserted his friends and backers—well, it would have been vastly inconvenient to look after his friends' affairs when he had declined to take care of his own; he knew it would look dirty to forsake them, but he was assured by those to whom he had given his confidence that it was all right. Yet he has found at last, to his cost, that however deceitful may have been the views which he was induced to take of things, men of sound judgment still look at them very differently, and they condemn him. He has gone down in public estimation; he is spoken lightly of; he is left out of account when matters of high import are considered; none care for his action or opinion.

Should a man, being in such a strait as has been described, desire to know how he might retrieve his fortunes and recover his place in the world's esteem, he would surely

be told that he must mend his ways, and seek help from more capable and honest counsellors.

If an individual may not break away from, and set at nought with impunity, the rules of conduct by which sensible men have been guided in all ages, far less may a nation play "fantastic tricks before high heaven" without smarting for its rashness. Angels may weep for it perchance, but men will assuredly visit it with their scorn and defiance, their slight regard and contempt. It is a cruel mortification to a country to have come down by unwisdom from a high estate. Easy as may have been the descent from an honourable standing, the way up again to the old prized position is confessedly both difficult and tedious. The nation which has stooped to folly will have need of much patience, much self-control, and much determination, if it endeavours to recover its former place in the world.

The above reflections have been induced by the care which must daily harass every patriotic Briton—namely, the fallen condition of our island among the nations, the loss of respect which she endures, the indignities with which her enemies oppress her, the slighting look with which observers regard her. It is truly a bitter thing to have her stigmatised as one who cannot keep her own against bold (but not formidable) assailants, who will not resent insult and wrong, who will leave her allies and friends to shift for themselves in the hour of danger. Who cares nowadays on which side Great Britain may range herself in any dispute? Who will turn aside from his purpose, or pause for an instant in his career, because her interests are endangered, or her

displeasure is aroused? Is she not known as the degenerate nation which may parley and protest, but will not fight heartily; who is ready to degrade herself by confessions of imagined crimes and sins; whose enmity is less dangerous than her friendship; who will always yield if she is pressed hard enough?

Our countrymen, however they may try to disguise the truth from themselves, must know and feel that Britain is pointed at as a failing Power,—as one whose part has been played out, and who is hastening to insignificance. For long our optimist citizens have been saying that our country is only a little wilful and eccentric, like many that have grown great and enjoyed their greatness long; that she can afford to soil herself a little in caprice, her renown is so solid and immovable; that ere long we shall see her shake herself, as at other times, and become once more the dignified, ascendant, inflexible Power, whose will is as the stroke of fate. Comfort of this kind did very well while there was only a folly or two to excuse—only a harmless exhibition or two of unsound demeanour. But the untoward acts have, as time rolled on, become altogether too many and too ruinous to be winked at as freaks. They have destroyed our reputation; they would have made us impotent in the councils of Europe, only that we have been beforehand with foreigners, and proclaimed ourselves abject; they have implanted bitter heartburnings in the breasts of our colonists, of English residents abroad, and of all those countries which would from old associations, from present convenience, or from geographical necessities, have been otherwise desirous of forming alliances with

us. They must, before long, seriously affect our commerce (it is deteriorating already) and our revenue. They may, if we are not wise in time, jeopardise the security of our island. And, in our case, being wise in time means speedily getting rid of evil counsellors, and bringing our way of life into harmony with the sentiments of the wisest of mankind, and the maxims which, having been tried for ages, have proved the soundest guides. It is much the same reformation as was recommended to the man of declining fortunes and character, whose case was glanced at in the opening of this paper.

That we may be just to our own peculiarities and wanderings from the safe path, be it at once admitted that most of them proceed from sentiments which are in the abstract excellent, and which are highly honourable to all who hold them. The love of peace, the forgiveness of injuries, the suffering ourselves to be defrauded, the acceptance of insult and wrongs, the declining to seek what should be our own, pity for the oppressed, patience with all who have erred and are deceived, the wish to satisfy all just claims against ourselves—no man need blush to proclaim these as the principles of his conduct, whether he may act individually or as one of a community. But men get astray, as we presume to think, by imagining that these principles, which are so easily expressed, and which sound and read as so simple and unsophisticated, are as easy of application as they are of acceptance; while the truth is, that it often requires a great deal of consideration and judgment to rightly apply them, and that it may sometimes be dangerous and prejudicial to good living

to apply them rashly and indiscriminately.

Here it is possible that the writer may be met by the objection: "You must not say that these principles are difficult of application. We know whence they come—from the very HIGHEST authority. They were not meant for subtle reasoners or doctors of the law alone, but were for the guidance of the uninstructed, the poor, the guileless. The maxims being given for the use and good of all, all, low as well as high, must be capable of applying them." In answer to which it may be said that as to capacity there need be little question. All may be capable of living in accordance with these great rules; but in order to do so they must at least have some regard to the state of things which the rules appear to contemplate. Persons who fully recognise the obligations of the Christian code, and who strive to live according to them, will have no difficulty in carrying out *inter se* these divine precepts. But duty becomes less plain when a Christian on one side is faced by an unbeliever or a scorner on the other. The precepts are surely not absolute in the second case, as they are in the first! Indeed a consideration of the whole Christian code, and not of a part only, will make it clear that the exact line of duty is variable according to circumstances. The same authority which taught us to be loving and forbearing, cautioned us also not to give that which is holy to the dogs, or to cast pearls before swine,—which may fairly be taken to mean, that kindly offices to their fullest and literal extent are not due towards them who cannot or who will not appreciate the spirit in which they are offered. A God-fearing man is

not bound to place himself at immense disadvantage with his adversary by rigid adherence to precepts at which the other will scoff, and by gentle treatment which the other will not reciprocate, but will repay with injuries. Surely, before a man turns his cheek to the smiter, he has a right to consider who and what the smiter may be, and to withhold the humiliation of himself if he perceives that he is dealing with one crafty, unscrupulous, and grasping.

The experience of all ages has shown us that the world has always abounded, and does now abound, with people who care very little for right or justice, who will gain for themselves all that they can by any arts or force which they can use, and who will only press the harder and become more exorbitant in their demands, the more it may be attempted to conciliate them by concession and moderation. In regard to such it is neither obligatory as a matter of duty, nor expedient as a matter of worldly wisdom, to court their insults and submit to injuries from them.

Allowing, then, that the errors of our countrymen may be only the effects of a regard for duty which has been extended beyond what is necessary or reasonable, and that therefore they differ much in kind from errors which have proceeded from evil desires, yet it must be insisted that they are, in fact, errors, and that they ought to be abandoned. It should be understood, too, that the motives of our actions have made little difference as to their unpleasant consequences; and that good intentions (about which there is a proverb) will not relieve us from the remorseful consciousness that we suffer for only our own perversity and folly.

If we look now at the manner in which our nation has borne itself for the last few years, it will not be difficult, perhaps, to perceive that the observations above made are very relevant, and that the evil plight in which we find ourselves is traceable to our indiscretions—our amiable indiscretions, let us say. We have had troubles and failures in Ireland, in India, and in South Africa; and we are at this time going through the pains of an egregious failure, amid most humiliating circumstances, in Egypt. We never gave ourselves a reasonable chance of succeeding in any of these complications; no wonder, therefore, that we did not succeed. And if we would recover our old influence for good among the Powers of Europe and of the world, it behoves us to make a thorough change in our method of viewing political affairs. The thing here advocated is not a departure from any of the commendable *principles* on which conscientious men have acted, but a departure from the extreme straining of those principles, by which they are made to lead to goals at which they were never aimed, and arrival at which cannot fail to be perplexing and mortifying to them who stumble upon them.

We have intended and endeavoured, no doubt, to do what is romantically called justice—at any rate to do good—to Ireland. Certainly no good has been done; and this nation lies open to the reproach of having only intensified the veiled rebellion which for years has been vexing us. Ireland has proved to be utterly unmanageable and irreconcilable. The concessions which we have made to the disaffected Irish have rendered their disaffection more rancorous and their

demands more unreasonable; and our harshness to the quiet and loyal inhabitants of Ireland has wellnigh alienated from us whatever sympathy and support we possessed there. Well, we are taught to do good to them that hate us, and in the case of the disaffected Irish we have literally obeyed the injunction. But there has been no blessing on our obedience,—and why? First, because it soon was, and it long has been, manifest that the rebels were not to be touched by kindness, that they had no real complaint to make against us, and that all our concessions were to pressure and threats: secondly, because what we chose to give was given at the expense of those who had always been true to us, whom we had no right to rob for the purpose of courting the insurgents. It was certainly a mistake to continue showering benefits on these people after we had evidence of the rooted and rancorous ill-will which they bear to us, and which repays our soft advances by murder and outrage, and by the most truculent sentiments and threats. It was more than a mistake—it was a crime—to seek to win these fiendish malcontents by trampling on our own friends, and spoiling them, that we might propitiate our foes with the plunder.

It was once our practice to lecture—perhaps a little insolently—the despotic Powers of the world when they were troubled with insurrections and civil buffetings. We hardly repressed our disdain of the art of governing by the strong arm. And we implied, if we did not express, our conscious superiority and our belief that we alone knew how to keep our subjects contented and happy. At present it may be said, we fear, that no country, whatever the

form of its government, has made so sorry an outcome of its dealings with a rebellious province or dependency as Great Britain. All the nations over whom we were fond of exulting gird at us now and thank God on us when they behold our utter incapacity to appease, to restrain, or to lead into a way of prosperity and peace the Irish race.

Foreigners, however, are not left to judge us by what they can see of our doings at home. We go out into the world, and make parade of our failings, literally challenging mankind to take note of the senseless courses which we follow. Few countries, it is believed, have ever voluntarily brought upon themselves such dishonour as we have incurred in our contests with the Boers of South Africa. After letting them beat us in the field, we consented to all their demands just as if we had been unable to continue the war. We not only yielded territory, but we failed to demand satisfaction for the lives of many of our soldiers who had been, not killed in action, but treacherously murdered in the Transvaal. Not only did we submit to the semi-savages of that region, but we made with them a convention, the ink in the signatures of which was hardly dry when the Boers declared that they would not be bound by it, and impudently violated the whole agreement. And we bore this further insolence—we incurred material loss as well as loss of honour. But the worst feature in this our second lapse was that the convention had provided for the independence of the native tribes, against whose persons and whose property the eyes of the Boers were known to be evil. The rupture of the convention

took away all the slight defence which these unfortunate tribes had left after the withdrawal of our troops and representatives. Yet we suffered the insult and the wrong to be perpetrated, left the unhappy natives to their fate, and, to our lasting shame be it said, some of these were tribes who had been our friends, and who had lent us active support in our quarrels. It is most difficult to understand on what plea of duty we can rest our unparalleled behaviour towards the Boers. Had we declined altogether to fight them, and given way when they first attacked us, our proceedings would have been less incomprehensible, and involved less dishonour; but we entered into hostilities with them with sound and fury¹ sufficient to let all the world know how we were engaged; and then, having maintained the war to the point where they were able to snatch a victory from us and to kill our general, we consented to an ignominious peace, the terms of which, disgraceful as they were to us, the Boers repudiated without loss of time. But if it be difficult to palliate our conduct towards these insolent barbarians, it is certain that no valid excuse at all can be made for the mean and dastardly manner in which we abandoned our former friends, humble though they were. We may search long enough before we find a text which by any amount of straining can be made to shelter so infamous a *lâcheté*. It is impossible to discover any generous or manly feeling from which it can have proceeded. We showed ourselves in this to be recreant and degenerate; and we stand before Heaven and man indefensible.

Our unfortunate misdemeanour in South Africa is undoubtedly one principal cause of the disesteem into which we have fallen. It is an error for which we may well put on sackcloth and sprinkle ashes on our heads. Its wages—that is, our present humiliation—make it painful and confounding to look back to our past. When we think on the respect in which we once were held, and compare it with the slight regard in which we lie feeble to-day, our moan may be like that of the patriarch: “Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. . . . I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners. But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.”

To our retrograde movements in India the same disgrace does not attach as to our collapse in South Africa. They were inexpedient and uncalled for, but not cowardly or criminal. It is not supposed that they were injurious to any but ourselves, and we had avenged ourselves of our enemies before we retreated. What we had to be ashamed of or to regret in our previous dealings with the treacherous Affghans it must be hard for the tenderest conscience to discover; or why, after winning our way fairly to Candahar, we should voluntarily have surrendered the fruits of our victories, and retracted our frontier. But by some casuistry we forged an indictment against ourselves, hastened to confess ourselves guilty, and then underwent what was by no means a light penance, even to a nation

¹ The war was announced in the Queen's Speech.

in which the nicer feelings of honour were for a time blunted. Probably we were possessed by such a spirit as excites the fakirs and dervishes to wear their tongues to the stumps on pavements, or to let the fingers grow through the backs of their clenched hands. If the praise of men was our object in doing this, we missed our mark. No mortal admired our self-denial. Let us hope that our aim was a higher one than that.

But now, if we turn to our recent doings in the land of Egypt, we find them to be of such a contradictory character among themselves that it is hard to refer them to any fixed principle whatever. Assuredly we have not in that country been adverse to the shedding of blood, neither have we turned our backs on our enemies, whatever we may have done to our friends. If in other cases we declined to fight when fighting was our only sensible course, here we fought with great slaughter, when it was evident to discerning men that war might have been avoided altogether. A year or two before we sacrificed our honour rather than fight; when the day of Egypt came, we made bloody wars rather than avert bloodshed by showing a bold front in the beginning of the quarrel. The call of honour might have justified war; the name of peace might have been used to sanction a disregard of honour; but we have wrought with such skill that we have avoided both peace and honour!

The Egyptian trouble was the bob of Nemesis after the Transvaal poltroonery. Arabi heard of our default, and said within himself of Britain,—“A tame cheater she; you may stroke her as gently as a puppy greyhound: she will not swagger with a Barbary hen

if her feathers turn back in any show of resistance.” So he thought he also would try and scare us; and it is odds but he might have done it too, had not Heaven’s grace towards us denied him even the slightest initial advantage. Had our name been as potent as it was six years ago, he would probably have “seen us damned ere he had challenged us” or resisted our will; but our ill fame had flown before us, and conjured up in him visions of another Majuba Hill, another capitulation at the first scratch, perhaps a lighting of his hookah with the solemn covenant! Thus the Egyptian complication resulted from our loss of reputation in the first place; in the second, from our hesitation to take a decided attitude, and to deal as vigorously with it as its importance demanded, when it began.

Grant that our hesitation to take a clear and pronounced position with regard to Egypt in the beginning of 1882 proceeded from a sincere unwillingness to enter upon another contest, yet it was that very uneasiness and that vacillation which dragged us into war at last, with the dreadful incidents of the bombardments, the Alexandria massacres, the Tel-el-Kebir campaign, and the ills, still more damaging to us, which have succeeded to those bloody events. It did not rest wholly with us whether there should be war or not; and by our nervous delay to sternly forbid those actions of the insurgents of which we disapproved, we encouraged Arabi to proceed, and paved the way to that pouring out of blood which we so much deprecate. The case affords a very striking example of the inexpediency, and in fact of the sinfulness, of a strong Power faltering and flinching when there are grave entanglements to-

ward, and when it behoves her to take her stand manfully and unwaveringly.

Whether the case be tried in the court of conscience or of expediency, we shall find it difficult to get a decision approving our proceedings in Egypt since the Madhi became formidable in the Soudan. It was not fair of us to act one day as if we were supreme in Egyptian affairs, and the next as if we were wholly irresponsible in regard to the same. We ought either to have prevented the advance of the undisciplined and ill-appointed force of Hicks Pasha, or we should have seen that it went forward with all the equipment and support necessary to its success. We did neither; and we cannot pretend that we are guiltless of the blood of all in that unfortunate expedition. Our fault was—and it is a grievous fault for such a nation as we are—that we could not make up our minds as to our own open acceptance of the chief control, or as to the proper course to be followed—an incapacity quite deserving of the contempt which it has brought upon us! The same remarks may be made concerning Baker's expedition, which ended in utter disaster, though not in general destruction like the other. It is another item to our discredit.

But worse, perhaps, than our shrinking from our duty with regard to these adventures, was the indifference which we displayed to the fate of the several small Egyptian garrisons which were posted in the Soudan. We knew well what they stood exposed to after the failures of Hicks and Baker to relieve them; we had in Egypt a British force sufficient to have effected their deliverance; and yet we did not move a man

to their assistance until it was too late to save them. After, by our delay, we had sealed their destruction, we sent forward our own troops to Suakim. Now, either it was incumbent upon us to take order for the rescue of these unfortunate garrisons, or it was not. If it was, how can we excuse ourselves for not moving in time? if it was not, why did we send our men to Suakim at all? It will be difficult to give to these questions answers such as a Briton would have considered befitting him a few years ago. And whether we judge ourselves in the matter or not, our neighbours do not fail to censure us, and that severely.

Of General Gordon's most remarkable expedition into the disturbed provinces we hesitated to speak in a foregoing column, not because we overlooked, or thought lightly of, his adventure—who could forget the prominence of his figure in this great bungle, devoted as he has shown himself to his duty?—but because accounts of him had been so long delayed when we took up the pen, and such sad fears were entertained concerning him, that it was painful to name him while his condition was so uncertain. His mission is probably the most harebrained expedient that was ever invented by statesmen who had at their command the wealth and military resources of a great country by which they might have made sure of their object. The word *statesmen* was used as indicating what Ministers of State ought to be and generally are; but no student who in after years may read of the burlesque which these Ministers ventured to put before Europe, will admit their right to the appellation. He will think rather that they must be courtiers of some Regnier of

Anjou—men who seek their inspiration as to statecraft from the lore of romance and knight-errantry.

Nevertheless it is a truth—a very melancholy truth for Britons to reflect on, in the present or in the future—that the Cabinet of her Majesty Queen Victoria did, in this year of grace 1884, literally attempt to achieve the deliverance of several small garrisons of Egyptian troops, who were beleaguered by barbarian tribes in the Soudan, by sending thither one general officer, with a pitifully small staff of attendants, and not a corporal's charge by way of troops. They made this essay after an attempt to relieve these garrisons by Egyptian arms had been baffled through the barbarians defeating it in the field. It was expected—or pretended to be expected—by our most ingenious romancists, that the tribes, flushed with victory, would surrender the fruits of conquest at the wave of Gordon's wand, perhaps spell-stricken by some talisman which he carried. We know not whether the programme went so far as to promise that, immediately after success, Gordon was to have his own particular ballad, with his picture on the top of it, the Mahdi kissing his foot; or whether, as the exploit would be quite adapted for Scheherezade's budget, a supplement was to be added to the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*; but, no doubt, full celebrity was to be given to him and to his senders.

We are far from wishing to speak otherwise than with respect of Gordon himself, only it was impossible in the above paragraph to separate him from the scenic *artistes* who imagined this rainbow episode. His former acquaintance with the region and the tribes whither he was despatched, his

success in many a difficult negotiation in days past, his oft-proved readiness and resources, his firm spirit, all justified his answering to the call which was made in the name of his country. He could not help it if our Ministers, being melodramatically affected, made him figure in a piece which all his talent and reputation could scarcely rescue from being ridiculous.

Too little explanation has yet been given to the public of Gordon's official acts in the Soudan to afford full means of judging of them. It is, however, known that he used the large discretionary power with which he was endowed to countenance slavery; also, that he was most pressing in his desire to appoint, if he did not actually appoint, a notorious patron and conductor of the slave-trade to be governor of Khartoum. By these proceedings, which only the most pressing necessity could excuse, he subjected his Ministerial constituents to some very severe questionings and strictures which, if they had been met with candour and urbanity, need not have been particularly hurtful to them. But feeling at last, no doubt, the contemptible position in which they had placed themselves, they chose to fence and shuffle and to withhold information in a manner which was highly unsatisfactory to the country generally.

Gordon's appointment, its wild-goose character notwithstanding, and his adventures, would have called forth far less remark than they did, had not a change in his circumstances laid him open to one of those treasons of cold-blooded desertion for which the British Ministry have unhappily become notorious. It has to be borne in mind that, when he proceeded to

Egypt last winter, no British troops had advanced into the Soudan. There had been the battles to which we have adverted, with Egyptian forces; but England was not looked upon by the tribes as their enemy. General Gordon, therefore, went to try his fortune in a friendly country; and although his advance was attended with considerable hazard, yet it was only such hazard as he had laid his account to when he set out. Afterwards, however, when Egyptian troops had sustained a second defeat under Baker Pasha; when Sir Gerald Graham had advanced from Suakim twice, and each time inflicted very severe slaughter upon Osman Digna's followers; when Gordon himself had changed his tone, and begun to threaten the tribes with British vengeance,—his position as a British officer and emissary became seriously changed. He had still his great personal influence to aid him, but nothing except that, for he was now surrounded at Khartoum by infuriated adversaries, and his life and liberty were in extreme jeopardy.

It would scarcely be believed if it were not now notorious, and if the confession of it had not been wrung after much pressure from conscious Ministers, that, while he was in the danger above described, the British troops, except a handful of men left to garrison Suakim, were withdrawn from the Soudan, and Gordon was left to struggle for life and freedom as best he could. As soon as rumours reached London from the correspondents of the press that such a retreat was in contemplation, the consternation of the country was of course extreme. The rumours were not believed, but still the Opposition thought it their duty to question Ministers straitly

as to reports which touched Ministerial credit so nearly, and which had startled the whole land; and painful work they had to make the unwilling witnesses speak. Ministers resorted to what is now their favourite mode of concealing shameful truths. They gave evasive and misleading answers; they pleaded want of full information, the detriment to their negotiations of disclosures in Parliament, their intention to lay correspondence on the table on a future day, the necessity of waiting for the opinions of officers on the spot; and by these devices they baffled inquiry for some time. Being at length, however, compelled to make a statement, they confessed, just before the Houses adjourned for the Easter recess, that General Gordon was left to his own resources, as had been alleged in the newspapers; and they added that the General was, as far as their instructions were concerned, free to leave the Soudan if he pleased. No wonder that the announcement was received with murmurs of indignant contempt: a man shut in by enemies on every side spoken of as *free* to leave! Here was another barefaced desertion—this time of an accredited emissary, and a British officer. We need not comment on it, as the confession is recent, and the exclamations of an impatient public in reference to it have not subsided at the time of this writing.

We have the satisfaction of knowing, too, that up to our going to press Gordon was alive—the long period of interrupted telegrams having ended. Some farther important pages of his history may be known to the world before these remarks can be published; but be the sequel what it may, the stain of having left him to his fate

must remain first upon the Ministers who planned the base desertion, and then upon the nation which, on being informed of it, did not express its discontent in such a way as to force the Government into a more creditable course. We are quite aware of the argument against a continued campaign in Egypt at this season of the year, that may be rested on the climate. Our troops, if in the field there, would probably suffer severely from the heat and its consequences; but has that consideration ever prevented us hitherto from prosecuting a campaign when our honour absolutely required us to do so? Besides, we have the resource of our Indian forces. These might have been sent to Gordon's relief and support. The excuse will by no means suffice.

What we do know officially of Gordon's present position, and of the state of things in Egypt and in the Soudan, is due entirely to the indefatigable persistence of members of the Opposition against stubbornness and arts which might have wearied and baffled less patient and devoted public men. This must be remembered when the complaints of the Ministry at having their time taken up in answering questions when they would gladly be devoting it to the furtherance of domestic business, are considered. They, by their ambiguous, sparing, and evasive answers, cause the multiplication of questions. If they would answer frankly at first, there would be but little time expended in obtaining the information. But it has to be extracted, and blame for the time lost in winning it word by word, must rest on those who so vexatiously endeavour to withhold and mystify it. There seems to be a conscious-

ness among Ministers that the Egyptian affair is too much for them: hence they always respond like culprits; hence their extreme dislike of, and complaints against, all and every investigation.

Coming now to the merciless slaughters which have been executed upon Osman Digna's followers since the fall of Sinkat and Tokar, how in conscience can we reconcile them with our oft-declared horror of bloodshed and cruelty? It is perfectly inexplicable how, if we were right to slink away as we did from the Transvaal rather than have the blood of the Boers upon our souls, we can confess to the almost wanton destruction which we inflicted upon Osman's followers. We call the destruction wanton because, now that it is accomplished and our troops have been again withdrawn into Egypt proper, we have by our fighting in no respect modified the state of things in the Soudan. We have not put down Osman's power; we have not checked slave-dealing; we have not settled the government of the Soudan according to our pleasure.

The above-mentioned blots in our history afford ample reason why we have incurred the world's ill opinion. But we said above that our countrymen had not only shown a zeal which is not quite according to discretion in these transactions, but that they have been led astray by evil counsellors. The leaders who ought to have guided the national action in the right path, and to have guarded the national honour, are the very persons who have condescended to foster and to give effect to overstrained and unhealthy sentiments. It is not likely that they were deceived, whatever their followers may have been. In all probability

they foresaw all the deplorable consequences which have ensued from cherishing these morbid feelings, for they are men of great powers and acquirements. They know well by what conduct nations have prospered and have earned reputation in the past; and there is no doubt that they could, if they were so minded, depict in most powerful description the blunders and inconsistencies of the country which have been deplored in this paper. But they are not likely to do that. The foibles and extravagances of our masses are too valuable a fount of illicit influence for them to dry up one drop of it willingly, however baneful they may know it to be to the public health. No; they "turn diseases to commodity." They gain for themselves the voices of the multitude by cheering on the infatuated towards the precipice and the flood. "What matter? If the fools wish to be deceived, let them be so. They will give us no thanks for telling them the truth, or for checking them in their fond career; but if we help them to injure and stultify themselves, we may be set on high for a time as prophets and public benefactors. They shall have what their minds are set on, though it be to their own hindrance." This was the device of our evil counsellors;—

"And ne'er did Faith with her smooth
bandage bind
Eyes more devoutly willing to be blind,
In Virtue's cause;—never was soul in-
spired
With livelier trust in what it most de-
sired."

It is but a light thing that the nation should come to loss and contempt as long as its misleaders can say one to another with the Ephesian—"Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

Remembering the evil condition to which we have been brought, one can only smile at the dread expressed by our present rulers and their friends at the idea of giving what they call "a blank cheque" to their opponents. The effects of this blank cheque will, as they would have us believe, be surpassingly disastrous. It is true that it would stop the imbecile pretence at government which is going on now; but beyond that, it is hard to see how it could be an evil, even according to *their* doctrines. Of course those who name it with alarm are too cunning to tell us in what respects we should or could be worse off if the cheque were signed. Will they venture to say that affairs could, under any new set of ministers, be more unsuccessfully or more damagingly managed than they have been during the last four years? Will they affirm that religion and morality can be discouraged by any probable Government whatever, more than they have lately been by the countenance that has been given to brawling atheism? Do they dread expense? The present Ministry has twice increased our taxation above the highest point at which it stood under their predecessors, and will probably have to increase it again, if they remain in office. Is it war that they deprecate? If so, it may be truly replied to them, that if the Tories slew their thousands, the Radicals have slain their ten thousands. Verily, the flourishers of the blank cheque should take a little thought before they parade it again, and should reflect whether, although it may mean a leap into the dark, such a leap could land us in anything worse than the daylight has been shining on since 1880.

We have expressed a fear that Ministers have unscrupulously turned to party account the high-flown fancies of the people: it may be added to that charge that, in dealing with Ireland and with foreign countries, they have manifested the greatest incapacity for their business. The tales are old now of the long tolerance of crime in Ireland, of the Kilmainham treaty, made with men "steeped to the lips in treason," of the vacillating counsels which racked the Egyptian sedition into a deadly war. But our most modern experience, instead of showing any improvement upon those great blunders, has only revealed greater helplessness, confusion worse confounded.

It seems to be a tenet of our incapables that they, according to their pleasure, can give or refuse prominence to passing events—that men in office can control circumstances, and need not be controlled by them. And it is probably in conformity with this tenet that they have been endeavouring now, for several months past, to put aside serious consideration of the Egyptian tangle, in order that attention may be concentrated upon some of their home schemes, from which they expect advantage to themselves. But surely there come now and then upon us events which challenge notice so loudly that it is futile to be heedless of their demands. It may be inconvenient and irritating to have to turn from a more favoured study in order that the Egyptian knot may be patiently and creditably unravelled; yet such is the gravity of this matter, that no statesman worthy of the name would think of refusing his earnest and anxious regard to it. It may be remembered that Mr Pitt had in hand a scheme of reform at the time when

the French Revolution broke out; but, recognising the engrossing importance of foreign affairs, he gave his mind to them, and postponed his home legislation. Our Government, however, seem to look upon the startling events in the neighbourhood of the Nile as gadflies, which come buzzing and stinging to divert their regard from domestic work. They accordingly endeavour to get rid of them as they crop up by impatient fillips and punches, not treating them as worthy of a continuous and energetic policy. Neither does it impress them much that the gadflies have drawn of late considerable streams of blood.

It might be almost gathered from the fretful complaints of our Ministers, and especially of the Prime Minister, that the Opposition were pulling the strings which move events in Egypt. The Opposition could not be troublesome if there were no startling and most important events continually occurring there which, whether convenient or not, are importunate facts. The Opposition are obliged to attend to them, because the Government will not do so. The Opposition would be speedily disarmed now if Ministers would decide upon a policy: it never would have had any power of embarrassing if a policy had been decided upon six months ago.

The interests of the country have been sacrificed, and are still put to hazard, to save in name that which has long been past saving in fact—to wit, the consistency and credit of the Administration. It is one of the absolute crotchets of the time that Britain must under no circumstances annex territory any more than she may make war. The irresistible outfall of events compels her to do

both. But inasmuch as both are, in the cant of the period, solemnly repudiated, it is one shift of a deceitful game to execute them in fact while denying them in name. As the treaty of Kilmainham was asserted to be no treaty; as the bombardment of Alexandria, which took place wholly on foreign waters and foreign soil, was styled a defensive operation on our part; so our real domination of Egypt must not be called by the name of annexation, protectorate, or any such thing. While the party in power thus shrink from acknowledging our real position,—while they hate and chafe at the necessities which have brought us to it,—while they labour to give evidence by their acts that the situation is not what it really is, and what they know it to be,—it must needs be that their proceedings will be feeble and vacillating, and their meaning incomprehensible.

We presume that the garrison of Sinkat was left to be put to the sword, and its women and children to be sold into slavery, as a proof that we did not exercise a control over Egypt. We sent, too late to save it, the force that might have saved it, as a proof that Ministers were determined to remain in office even at the expense of their cherished consistency. As soon as they were threatened with censure, it was found that we did exercise a control. The most tricky and treacherous governments of which we have records could hardly have gone beyond this cold-blooded juggling with human life. It is written of the first Napoleon that his “dice were human bones”; but how far did he outdo in selfish cruelty our professing worshippers of peace, and censorious critics of others? This

is the outcome of inciting the people to be righteous overmuch.

The virtue, the advantage, or the glory of slaughtering such numbers of Osman’s followers perhaps our immaculate teachers will condescend to explain when they give their next exhortations to peace and goodwill, and expatiate on the wickedness of their political opponents.

Let us now turn aside for a moment to examine a noteworthy contradiction which is observable in the country and in the time. We have above animadverted on the prevailing desire for peace, which has been strong enough to make the nation endure indignity, rather than uphold its honour by going to war. Yet we know that the rivers of blood which our Ministers have caused to be shed in the Soudan, called forth very little, if any, popular protest. The one circumstance is not in unison with the other. How can they be reconciled?

We believe the truth to be this. Alongside of their peace-worshipping and self-abasing spirit our masses are possessed with much of another spirit which lusteth to envy. Socialistic ideas, more or less pronounced, affect our labouring classes, and excite them as truly, though perhaps not as openly, as their thirst for some of the beatitudes. If they object to going to war for the sake of national benefit, they feel no compunction at the idea of acquiring for their class, by means of the laws, the property now held by the wealthier part of the community. The party now in power, who study them and are wise in their generation, are aware of this predatory disposition, encourage it, and by open or veiled undertakings instil the belief that they will be ready, when

opportunity may offer, to realise its hopes. The many are often, therefore, in a strait, being impelled on the one hand to make protest on behalf of outraged peace, but on the other to forgive much to the men through whom they expect some day to enjoy copious plunder. Covetousness is for the time brisker than humanitarian sentiment. Peace and goodwill are very captivating, but a slice of a neighbour's property is an irresistible bait. It is thus that your peace-professing Ministers shed blood in torrents with impunity; it is thus that the people who sold honour for peace in South Africa now sell peace for the prospect of becoming possessed of other men's goods. Ministers know well that the greedy spirit which they do so much to strengthen is doomed to disappointment in the future as it has been disappointed in the past. But it serves their purpose for the present, and they do not, of course, trouble themselves about its immorality. These socialists "offend none but the virtuous: we laud them, we praise them."

The framing of laws for the purpose of conciliating socialism, must, sooner or later, perhaps at no distant date, operate to the serious detriment of the country at large, and especially of those for whose benefit they are apparently designed. The authors of those laws, it may be presumed, see clearly enough what the result must be, for it requires but small prescience to perceive it; yet they go recklessly on, the favour which they gain from the multitude for mulcting capitalists and capital being too great to be counteracted by considerations of prudence or patriotism. The workman is induced to believe that shackles and fines, imposed on capital for his

behoof by law, must be a permanent advantage to him, and he tenders his ready vote to friends and patrons who meet his wishes in this way. He does not see that the depressing of capital—which is the depressing of enterprise—must, if carried to any extent, end in serious injury to him. But that is all out of sight just now; and the prospect of the transfer of wealth to the lower orders charms without alloy.

It is unfortunately true that in their levelling projects, as well as in their new policy towards enemies and rebels, crafty demagogues may recommend their designs by a show of philanthropy. Something is to be wrested from the pitiless rich man for the benefit of the deserving toiler. The conception is plausible and attractive, and indeed it might be honestly approved if it were carried out with moderation and in a spirit of equity; but there is the gravest reason to fear that the spirit of the whole movement is simply one of spoliation. This is proved, first, by the magnitude of the burdens which it is sought to impose on capital; secondly, by the odium which our reformers strive to affix on capitalists—the bad name which is to prepare them for hanging. The capitalists are represented to the world as monsters in human form, who, for the sake of adding somewhat to their gains, do not refrain from imperilling the lives of those who serve them, and who resort to deceit and fraud of the most atrocious character in order to promote their unhallowed schemes. If it were only for the ill feeling that is thus created between masters and servants, this is cruel policy. Moreover, it cannot but arouse a spirit of resistance in the breasts of employers, which

will indispose them to concur cheerfully in even the most reasonable changes. But such considerations as this are not entertained. The object is a momentary popularity, and a cry is raised no matter how unjust, no matter how injurious to industry in general.

It was not, however, solely or principally to this enmity that we alluded when it was said above that these burdens, gratifying as they may be to the workman, have a tendency to injure him. Burdens on capital tend to the lowering of wages, and to the decrease of employment. Certain burdens there are that are necessary and fair; these must be imposed *coûte que coûte*, and the capitalist must face them as best he can. But arbitrary burdens, invented to court socialists, and under the pretence that they will permanently improve the workmen's condition, are a delusion and a momentous danger. The natural resource of an employer unduly weighted by the State is to recoup himself for the damage so accruing by lowering his expenses in other directions. Cutting down wages is one means, and a very obvious and often adopted means, of doing this. But cutting down wages is not a benefit to the labourer. Well, he can oppose the master's move by striking. Strikes, however, are not times of enjoyment to workmen while they last; and it has been ascertained, and is by this time pretty generally admitted, that, be their results what they may to the men, they injure business generally. Now, when an industry is damaged all through, the workmen cannot avoid bearing a share of the loss.

If business were known to be very prosperous in the country; if the revenue were advancing by

leaps and bounds, as it was said to be doing some twelve years ago,—the opportunity might be thought favourable for obtaining from thriving employers some advantages for their workpeople. But it is notorious that profits, if they can be made at all, are at the present time very meagre. The occasion, therefore, is particularly ill-chosen for hampering trade more heavily. The national wealth is undoubtedly being dissipated by the check which enterprise has received through the designs upon property and upon capital which are now so much in favour. The workman will probably find out, when it is too late to rectify the mischief, what a grievous future his smooth-spoken friends have prepared for him.

One would suppose, judging from the many instances of our nation's derogatory conduct which we have cited, that the preponderance of the uninstructed and inexperienced part of our population in the election of members of Parliament was already too great. It is the ignorant, the impulsive, the half-seeing members of our people who are the strength of all the humanitarian errors which have already brought us into such galling disrepute, and who will, if their influence be not counteracted, assuredly drag us still lower down. Yet, with this truth patent enough to them, our Ministers are endeavouring, by means of "the Representation of the People" Bill now before the House of Commons, to make the preponderance of our least intelligent class greater in a vast degree. The provisions and the particular tendencies of this Bill we have commented on in a former number: we have now to notice the passage of the second reading immediately before Easter

—an event which we have not hoped that the patriotic party would be able to avert.

The debate was, however, noteworthy as displaying the very small amount of sound argument which can be adduced for separating Redistribution from Extension. One expects to hear from the Prime Minister specious, if not very well founded, defences of the policy of his Administration. It was surprising how weak he was upon the expediency of not bringing the whole of his plan before Parliament at once. His contention was, forsooth, that, if Redistribution had been discussed now as well as the Franchise, the whole session would have been occupied with these electoral affairs, and no attention could have been given to those other subjects which, according to present arrangements, the Houses are expected to entertain as well as the Franchise. Now it appears to us that the redistribution of seats, even if taken by itself, is a far more important subject than either the Merchant Shipping Bill or the London Government Bill; but, viewed as the supplement of the Franchise Bill, which is already made part of the business of this session, it is unquestionably entitled to precedence before either of those measures. The necessity of postponing all other legislation in order that the Franchise and the Redistribution might be taken in the same session might be easily demonstrated; but the converse arrangement, as defended in the Prime Minister's argument, was simply of no force at all. Of course Ministers have reasons, which to them seem sufficiently cogent, for ordering business as they are doing: but from their not bringing these reasons forward it may be inferred that they are not such as the nation would be

satisfied with; and from their using such puerile arguments as that of the Prime Minister which we have just noticed, an entire want of sufficient cause for separating the two measures is indicated.

Thus the impression that was already prevalent, of Ministers working the two electoral measures separately for purely party objects, has gained strength from the recent debate, and the appositeness of the amendment proposed by the Opposition, but defeated by the Government, was made manifest. It brought into prominence as indefensible *the blot* which is at present to be condemned in the Ministerial proceedings. The Premier saw this, and seemed anxious to change the issue, for he repeatedly twitted his opponents with not meeting him with a direct negative. But the answer to his sarcasm was easy; for the new scheme is not of a kind which it would be justifiable or dignified to directly negative until the whole can be seen. Why the whole should not be seen is the question, and the Government have lamentably failed in answering it. And while observing this failure, we do not forget the strong—and as many say unanswerable—objections made by orators, who are now on the Ministerial side, in 1866, when a precisely similar division of a reform scheme was proposed. Notwithstanding, then, the defeat of the amendment, the case for separation is much weaker. It is almost imperative, and it certainly would be prudent, for its authors to exhibit their whole design. It is one which too intimately affects the interests of the country to allow of its being passed into law piecemeal; and they cannot, except by the production of it entire, do away with the suspicion that

party, and not national, advantage is their real aim.

If the chief object of Ministerial manœuvring be to keep the Liberal party in power for a very long period, one cannot but be struck with the similarity of the situation to that of the Coalition in 1783. The India Bill of the year just named was thought to be designed also to keep its authors in power, —in that case, by means of the patronage which it would give to Ministers. Then, as now, the House of Commons was favourable to the Ministerial scheme. It was at last defeated by the Lords; and it is to the Lords that we must look now as the last resort to ward off a disintegrating calamity. The country, when appealed to on the former occasion, endorsed the verdict of the Lords; and there is good reason to expect that it might do so now if called upon to pronounce. Should the House of Peers see fit to postpone the half-scheme in order that the sense of the country may be taken thereupon, there is great probability that they may achieve their object, but not a certainty that there would be an immediate dissolution. It would be open to Ministers to remain in office, and to pass the half-bill through the Lower House in a subsequent session and to send it again to their lordships.

When Mr Fox's India Bill came to grief, the Crown was an important factor in the disposition of events. The Crown, in constitutional exercise of the prerogative, dismissed the Ministry after their defeat in the Lords, and the succeeding Ministry dissolved Parliament after a time. These points are here reproduced because, in case of a rejection of the Franchise Bill by the Lords, much will depend upon the action of the Crown. It will

be competent to the Supreme Power to dismiss Ministers at once, or to give them the choice between resigning office and dissolving Parliament. These considerations are the more important, because, with the growing incapacity for the despatch of business in the House of Commons, it is to be expected that the Crown will take a more active part in the work of Government. Public duties must be attended to; and if the House of Commons cannot stay itself from degenerating into a mere Babel, we have only the Lords and the Crown to look to for guiding the State.

There is ground, then, for hope that enough of force is yet left in the works of the time-honoured machine to avert a state of things which will establish the Radical party in power, and be very like a tyranny of the multitude.

We hope that resistance, in the spirit of the late amendment, will be offered to the Bill in every stage. We ask that before this demi-project may be allowed to become law, there may be an appeal to the people,—a modest demand when made to politicians who claim to be accredited by the nation for the purpose of carrying into act its dearest wishes. We dispute—with good reason, as we think—the mandate. A dissolution of Parliament would throw business back, no doubt; but delay is nothing when weighed against the importance of ascertaining before we proceed the national feeling on the question. If it is so favourable as we are constantly told that it is by men in office and those who support them, we of the Opposition only court confusion by insisting on this appeal: yet we do insist.

The main argument of this

paper has been against feeble and damaging policy. An enormous extension of the franchise without reservation of a due weight to the more intelligent and wealthy classes of the community, must multiply the danger of our committing ourselves to courses apparently benevolent, but really fatal to our influence and our reputation, and likely to drag us often to the very catastrophe which we have been over-anxious to avoid, as in the Egyptian war. No precept is to a nation so instructive as experience. Failure and degradation, not occurring as the results of an accident or of a single false step, but going on steadily for several successive years, and traceable to one peculiar style of dealing with affairs, cannot but be powerful teachers. Our misfortune is patent: he that runs may read it. And we cannot comfort ourselves by reflecting that the reward which we have missed in temporal affairs, we have secured at least in our own consciences. Our excessive blood-guiltiness and our

baseness to our friends rise up and forbid us to lay any such flattering unction to our souls.¹ We cannot even flatter ourselves that we have impressed lookers-on with a belief in our moderation and charity. They score against us all our glaring departures from our self-chosen standards, and set down our genuine self-denials to miscarriage of selfishness. Shall we go on sinking lower and lower, or shall we turn over a new leaf? It will be in vain that we confess past error or form good resolves for the future, unless we free ourselves with vigour from our thralldom to bad advisers and leaders. The first effectual step towards reformation will be to elect a House of Commons that will not support the authors of all our folly. We must learn to suspect the candidates who court popularity by prophesying always (but never giving us) smooth things; and to give some little heed to those who have the manliness to caution us when we are bent on going wrong.

¹ The subjoined extract is from a speech delivered at Cocker-mouth by Sir Wilfrid Lawson about the middle of April: "Were the people of this country satisfied with the results of our policy in Egypt, and the way it had been carried out? He believed it was Shakespeare who said, 'We have supped full of horrors,' and he might say with truth, 'The people of England have breakfasted on atrocities.' One day they heard of an army going into the Soudan, and then disappearing, the same as the Egyptians did in the Red Sea. Such had been the fate of Hicks Pasha and his army. Another day they heard of a British General mowing down the poor unhappy Arabs who had shown more heroism than had ever been known in ancient or modern times; and he had been told that within a space of three acres no fewer than two thousand five hundred dead bodies had been seen. More disasters would follow if this policy was not stopped. They had been told that English policy in Egypt had proved the ruin of that country in eighteen months; and what he was afraid of was, that if this thing went on, they might ruin England too, for we could not commit these crimes without their returning upon us as a nation. Passion and prejudice might prevail for the hour, but the ultimate triumph of right was as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun."

Shakespeare did not say exactly what Sir Wilfrid attributes to him; but let that pass. The remarks are perfectly just, and in harmony with what is contended for in the foregoing article. We only hope that the honourable baronet's vote and interest will be used so as to accord with his speech.

Many men on both sides in politics believe that the much-to-be-desired appeal to the constituencies is at hand. It will be an opportunity, such as, if neglected now, will probably never be offered to the country again. The danger of acting for the benefit of a class, or of favouring sentimental fancies while passing by the lasting

interests of the kingdom, will be greater than it has been for many generations. There will be no place for repentance after this. Either we shall visit with resentment the authors of our past decline, or we shall experience a farther fall compared with which all that we have already suffered will seem but a light affliction.

[As the subjects and the arguments of the foregoing paper are in remarkable conformity with those delivered at Manchester by the Marquis of Salisbury on 16th and 17th April, we are extremely well pleased that our contributor's remarks should be confirmed by so eminent an authority. The article was written, and nearly the whole was in print, before the Marquis's speeches were published.—ED. B. M.]

THE DUKE OF ALBANY.

"Tu Marcellus eris. Manibus date lilia plenis:
Purpureos spargam flores, animamque nepotis
His saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani
Munere."

SINCE the great Latin poet turned his "ornate words" to the use of tears, lamenting the young Marcellus, there has been no more touching note in history than that, struck over and over again as the centuries have passed by, which has bewailed from age to age the removal of a young prince, in whose blossom of life a nation, a world, was interested, and from whom everything was hoped. Such young sovereigns of the heart are greater in their early years than any mortal monarch who has achieved the temporal greatness which belongs to man; for to the possibilities of their might have been there is no limit—their loss leaves a vacancy which ages after contemplate with regret. We say of them that they might have saved a dynasty, hindered a revolution, if only they had been permitted to use their fine faculties in the life below. There might have been no Great Rebellion, no scaffold at Whitehall, had Henry Stuart lived to bring wiser counsel to his house. There might have still been a king in France had the Duc d'Orleans escaped his accident. These reflections come naturally to the mind when Death, who spares no family, puts forth his hand upon the one Family in which all Englishmen are interested, whose rejoicings and afflictions unite us all in our common sentiments. It is the one alleviation of the general sorrow that no disturbance of the national order, no change such as those above indicated, can follow the removal of the young Prince whose end has been so affecting, whose life was so blameless. The bereavement in which we take so great a part cannot change the destination of a crown or affect the imperial policy. In this respect, but only in this, is it less than the others; but perhaps this very inferiority brings it nearer to our hearts. The youngest has a special favour which belongs to himself. It is but for a short time even that the title and position of maturity has been attached to the Queen's youngest son. The Duke of Albany—a title romantic, well-sounding, but unfortunate—is a name which is still new to our ears; but in that of Prince Leopold, the young man still at home in his mother's house, who but lately was making his first essays in public life, and in whom we first discovered with a pleased surprise capacities of thought and utterance which are not common to princes—this is a familiar and tender sound. It may not, indeed, be said in ages to come that had he lived the colour of the time might have been changed; but the loss in the highest rank of a temperate and modest mind occupied with the highest subjects, and in harmony with all that was most excellent and elevated in the national life and thought, makes a vacancy which in its way is inferior to none.

There is something very touching in the relationship between the Royal Family and the mass of the nation. It is scarcely a feeling so abstract as loyalty, which gives us in the Queen and her children an interest which is unfailing, which is never vulgar in itself, though its manifestations may sometimes be vulgar, and which is in most cases

genuine human sympathy and feeling for a representative family compelled by their position to enact all the occurrences of their life in our full sight and cognisance. We feel for her Majesty's children what we feel in other cases only for those whom we have known all their lives and ours—with this concentration of interest, that hers is perhaps the only family which we all know, with which we have all a common link, whose birthdays and domestic festivals and most intimate concerns are all matters of common information, and who ask at every turn in their affairs our sympathy and understanding. Loyalty is a more elevated and visionary but more distant sentiment. It is the poetry of national life, the devotion which is produced by that divinity which doth hedge a king. There are many to whom this divinity is doubtful, and the ethical sentiment beyond reach, in whom this kindly and homely tie is strong; and it is impossible to calculate how much it has been increased in recent times by the association of the Queen's sons with everything that is going on in England—all public business short of the highest, and all the innumerable local occurrences which are so important to ordinary men and women. In England at the present day the Royal Family are wanted everywhere; and there is a mixture of gracious favour and bounden service in all they do and are called upon to do, which involves one of those paradoxes which Englishmen love. Nothing can be more favourable to the permanency and prosperity of a royal house than this universal demand upon them. It is one which they have responded to with singular dutifulness, readiness to serve, and sympathy with everybody's concerns. In this, as in his life throughout, Prince Leopold held an individual part with which no one interfered. According to the common understanding and in common parlance, he was "the clever one," the most intellectual of his house. The ordinary comparison so universally made, that he resembled the Prince Consort more than any of his sons, is less to be insisted upon when we remember that England, which understood the excellence of the Prince Consort only after his death, was always pleased and proud of the performances of Prince Leopold, listening to his speeches with the pleasure we have in seeing our own children distinguish themselves, and delighted to find a new quality, perhaps unexpected, among the sons of England. In this respect he may have been said to be the favourite of the English public. And when, so short a time ago! his health seemed so far confirmed and strengthened as to permit of his full entrance into the affairs of life, his marriage and assumption of all the responsibilities and privileges of manhood, there was a particular satisfaction in the manner in which the country entered into the celebration of his marriage and his outset in existence. It seemed natural and appropriate that there should have been an added tone of happiness, perhaps a little additional splendour, in the ceremonial which testified that the Queen's youngest son, the only invalid of the family, had emerged from the delicacy of his youth, and was free to enter like other men into the enjoyments and best gifts of life. Old Windsor grew glorious for that ceremony in which there was more than ordinary pageantry, which was at the same time a thanksgiving for joy almost un hoped for. The superstition which is so near to the heart whenever it is made anxious by affection, may find now a special sig-

nificance in the name of Albany, which has never been fortunate, and in the sad association of events which has added to the woods of Claremont another brief story of royal happiness ending in early death. But when the young pair entered that melancholy house, there was the elation of troubles overcome and fears departed in the air—a sentiment which touches all hearts. Prince Leopold's marriage was the last of the many happy and magnificent ceremonials which have quickened the beautiful chapel of the Knights of the Garter into colour and movement, to which its noble architecture gives double beauty. It has now another solemn pageant added to its memories. Great titles have been pronounced over that vault, but none that carried with them more true and universal sympathy. The youngest, the most blameless, the bridegroom of the other day, the new-made father, the newly enfranchised man, with all his college friendships and brotherhoods still about him. Wherever Englishmen are, in the farthest corners of the earth, a sigh for the young life ended, the hopes destroyed, the career cut off, come to echo the funeral bells which sounded from the towers he loved—bells that rang for his birth and marriage, and now for the last time, the only voices audible in that great hush of sorrow and pity, rung him home.

It is hard to add anything that is not a simple commonplace to the record of such an event. It is one upon which it is easy to dilate, and in which our commonplaces are received with sympathy. The Duke of Albany carries with him a blameless reputation, a host of kind recollections, to his early grave. It was hoped that he might have added an honour to the many that belong to the throne, and that his sympathy with purely intellectual work, with art and science, and the labours of the mind, as apart from those of practical life, might have conferred on English literature something of that *éclat* of royal favour which has more recently distinguished that branch of national greatness. This promise lies among the other crowns and wreaths of affectionate recollection upon the storied stones that now cover him. During his short career his sympathies were always with the highest, and his opinions and reflections on literary subjects were those of a man of refined judgment and taste, to whom, as he matured and developed, the nation would have done well to lend an ear. And that England was well inclined to do so it needs no seer to tell. We cannot say with the ancient poet that *Marcellus eris*—had he lived he would have been—but with the modern, that he had all that is best in existence, that he lived and loved,—and with the “hands full of lilies” which Virgil invokes, and which all England has brought with tears, scatter flowers upon his tomb.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. DCCCXXIV.

JUNE 1884.

VOL. CXXXV.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER.—PART IX.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—TEDDY TELLS.

"The dawn is overcast, the morning lours,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
The great, th' important day."

—ADDISON.

OUR readers will bear in mind that Lady Fairleigh's summons to her brother took him to town on the very Thursday morning that Teddy Lessingham returned from his secret mission to Clinkton—the mission which had been undertaken at Whewell's instigation, or rather by his command and beneath his pressure; and now, while the gallant young stranger, who had thus appeared and disappeared as by magic before Bertha Tufnell's admiring eyes, had left behind him an impression that was as agreeable as it was stimulative and curiosity-inspiring, he with very different sensations—indeed, with but one thought and one desire filling his mind—was hurrying southwards with all the speed he could, only anxious to disburden his overcharged bosom of its oppressive and momentous contents.

The two quondam friends passed

each other on the way, for the train which bore Challoner up from Overton whistled into the London terminus just as that which bore Teddy down whistled out; but little did either think how near the other was.

Teddy had returned from the north the night before, too late to proceed home then and there, as he would fain have done, for the last stopping train had gone, and it was imperative that he should go by a stopping train, as he was careful to explain to all who would listen; and accordingly, after the twentieth assurance that none of the kind required would leave before morning, he had made himself snug at a good hotel, had enjoyed an excellent dinner and night's sleep, and had so far indeed bent to circumstances as to consider that the second morning train down would do well enough

for him. The first was really too early; they were not early people at the Hall, and our young friend was invariably the last to appear at the breakfast-table,—so that, ardently as he now burned to get back, to confront the traitor who had ousted him from Matilda's side, and who now in his turn was to be justly served by being himself hurled from that high place, 9.30 was too much: nobody could be up and dressed, and breakfasted, and started by half-past nine o'clock on a winter morning—a dull, foggy, worst kind of winter morning too, warm as an oven and oppressive as a feather-bed.

At eight he had been called, and had decided the point with a promptitude engendered by habits of ease; and another excellent hour's snooze, and the comfort of dressing by daylight instead of by gaslight, had been his reward.

Once on the alert, however, Teddy was brisk enough—so brisk indeed, that, long before it was needful, he was pacing the railway platform from which he was to start, whiling away the time by every means ingenuity could devise; restlessly consulting his watch every few minutes; investigating bookstalls, questioning porters, and getting himself entangled among trucks and luggage as the hour of departure approached.

Refreshed with his trip, his attention diverted by new scenes, new faces, and on the whole new thoughts, he was another man altogether from what he had been during the last few days; and now, literally aglow with information and indignation—but indignation of a kind that was endurable compared with the sullen torments lately undergone, which none had shared, and none had even seemed to see—he almost forgot, in the magnitude of his embassy, the im-

portance it cast upon himself, and the ignominy upon his rival, that his great piece of news, with all its details and variations, might not be quite so delightful for Matilda to hear as for him to tell.

So rapidly had his own feelings towards Challoner changed, with such a sudden crash had they fallen from the utmost heights of warmth and ardour to the lowest depths of dislike and distrust, that, as was usual with him, the latter, the present state of mind, had entirely swept away all recollection of the former.

Challoner was now odious to him; no name was too bad for such a scoundrel; there was nothing he would not believe of him, no fate he would not prophesy for him.

In epithets, muttered denunciations, and imprecations, his wrath found vent with an ease and satisfaction that only needed an auditor to make it complete; and with his sister for that auditor, the prospect as he drew near the old familiar country-side made him scarce able to tolerate the slightest delay.

Yes, Matilda would listen to him now. He had something to tell her now that would make her give him an audience, whether she would or not.

She would listen and he would unfold all. How amazed she would be! How she would stare when she heard where he had been, and with whom, and for what purpose!

"Yes, I went to the place, and ascertained the facts, and there can be no doubt on the subject," he imagined himself saying. "Whewell said I was the proper person to go, and so I was. Brothers are the people to interfere in affairs of this kind; and Overton is no good—he is not the sort of fellow at all to know what

to do. Whewell put me up to it, (she thinks a lot of Whewell), and as soon as I saw my way clear, I was off. You need not be afraid: I understood what I was about; I was as sharp as anything, and managed it all beautifully,—and now, what do you say to me? Am I not," &c., &c., &c., when of course she would caress him and thank him, and he would be her own Teddy once more.

But that Matilda would *mind*? That he was about to stab her to the heart? That he must pause and turn the knife aside, and blunt its edge, and soften its cruel stroke? Poor childish creature! the idea never so much as occurred to him.

With the utmost eagerness he now made his way on foot to the Hall by side paths and short cuts, which greatly curtailed the distance, and with complacency he discovered that it was only a little after half-past two by the large stable clock as he rounded the corner, and almost ran up to the front door. Matilda seldom if ever went out before three even in the short winter days; he was sure to catch her.

A footman was crossing the vestibule as the traveller stepped inside, and stopped short, surprised; but Teddy had forgotten to put any value on the suddenness of his reappearance, and indeed the man's pause and exclamation passed unheeded.

"Lady Matilda within?" He was getting out of his greatcoat as he spoke, and did not catch the reply.

"Eh? Is she in the dining-room? Is luncheon not over yet? Oh, it is over! Don't take it away though, John; I have not had any. Just leave anything there is; I'll be down directly. I want to see

Lady Matilda for a minute first; where is Lady Matilda? Is any one with her? Where, did you say, —where?"

He fully expected to hear, "With Mr Challoner in the boudoir, or in the billiard-room, or the library," —certainly "With Mr Challoner" somewhere or other; in which case he had in his own mind arranged to send by John a message to her ladyship—he knew exactly how he should phrase it—to the effect that he had returned by the mid-day train, and would be obliged if she would see him for a few minutes in private, as he had important information to communicate,—(Challoner, of course, need never know then, nor after, that it was *that* which constituted the information). And so much did the thoughtless brother enjoy the situation, so full was he of the honour and glory of the post he held, that it must be owned the footman's reply assuring him that her ladyship was alone and at liberty—that she had the minute before rung her bedroom bell, announcing herself ready for her afternoon's ride, and that her horse was just coming round from the stable—was in its way quite a disappointment.

"Is she just gone up, did you say?" he inquired a second time.

"Her ladyship went up a quarter of an hour ago, sir. She must be ready by this time, sir. I think I hear the horses coming round now," listening.

"Horses? Oh, bother! Well, I say, tell them to wait. I must see Lady Matilda first."

Horses? That meant that Challoner was also making ready for a gallop over the downs; and no doubt it was *his* horse, his own horse Trumpeter, whom that infernal puppy—

"I shall want Trumpeter myself," he said, sharply.

"Very well, sir; what time, sir?"

"Oh, I don't know: I'll tell you presently. I was afraid that he might be—that some one else might be taking him. What horse is Mr Challoner having, then?"

"Mr Challoner is gone up to town, sir,—gone up for the day, to return by the four o'clock train. Her ladyship is riding alone this afternoon, sir; Charles, I believe, is to attend her."

In another minute Teddy was tapping at his sister's door.

"Oh, you are come back, my dear boy!" cried Matilda, flying upon him with open arms; "and come back just in time to go with me to Endhill. I want you so much. Now that *is* nice of you! I am just off for Endhill: fly, and tell them to bring round Trumpeter too; and Charles need not go with us, need he? Think, Ted, it is a whole week, a week to-day, since I was there! Robert will inquire after my health, and hope I have not suffered from a cold, or a chill, or the miserable weather, or my exertions during the skating time; and Lotta will inform me that baby has grown out of all his frocks, and needs new ones, and beg to show me patterns and—Why, what's the matter?"

It had all come back to her companions now,—all the old home-feelings, the love of Matilda, and fear of Matilda, and dependence on Matilda—Matilda as his one necessity in life, his daily bread, his dearest, kindest, most beloved friend and comforter; and with the sight of her sweet face and the listening to her lightsome prattle, with the old blue riding-habit, and the greeting that had in it no word of reproach,—with the whole there came over poor Teddy's soft heart such a sense of guilt and dismay as he had never experienced before.

All his anticipated triumph shrank and withered into filthy rags.

"What's the matter, boy?" said Matilda, pleasantly. "Don't you want to come?"

"You see," stammered poor Teddy—"you see, I am just off a journey,—a long journey—two long journeys.

"How many more?"

"I don't know how many more, I am sure. I have been travelling ever since I left here," his courage rising a little as the dash and spirit of the thing recurred to him. "I have never been out of trains——"

—"Gracious me! What did you do that for?"

"I could not help it. It," cried Teddy, with a gulp—"it is a long way to Clinkton."

"To Clinkton? Oho! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Oh, now I begin to understand! Oh, you sly thing! It is a long way to Clinkton indeed,—a very long way. Pray—if it is not inquisitive to ask—pray what took you to Clinkton?"

"What took me?" cried Teddy, gaping at her as if she already must have divined, or ought to have divined, his object. "What?—you may well ask what took me."

"Why, she is not worse, is she? You are very grave. Dear Ted, I meant no harm; but I have heard nothing. I would not jest about it for the world, if she is really worse."

"She! Who?" He had been so full of the one aspect of the case, that he had forgotten there might be any other. "She! Who?" he demanded.

It was now Matilda's turn to stare.

"Oh! you mean Juliet Appleby," said Teddy, with a surprising effort. "Oh, I say!"—in consternation—"I say, Matilda, I forgot poor Juliet altogether! Upon my word,

I declare I never once thought of her; and I was on the spot and all! How very provoking! What would they say? And after my offering—but mind you never let out that I was there, and perhaps they may never hear of it. What a stupid I was, to be sure!”

“But,” exclaimed his sister, puzzled still more by this—“but if it was not on Juliet’s account, what, may I ask, were you doing at Clinkton? What was the attraction there, of all places? Your telegram——”

——“Ay, you got my telegram?”

“The night you left. But it merely said you had gone to a friend, and did not say where. Your friend was at Clinkton, then?”

“He lives there. I spent a couple of hours with him there yesterday.”

“A couple of hours!” said Matilda, laughing. “Pardon me, dear, but I cannot help it. A couple of hours! And you travelled all the way from London, five hours’ journey from London,” (she knew exactly how long it took) “to see—a friend. Dear, dear, dear! Funny boy,” patting him merrily on the shoulder. “What will he do next, I wonder?”

“Well, I wanted to see him,” began Teddy.

“And, to be sure, there was no earthly reason why you should not,” rejoined his sister; but even he could see that it was with difficulty she restrained the amusement his doings afforded her—“no reason at all; only you will allow—but no matter. Away with you now, you dear simpleton, and tell me all about it some other time! It will wait,—and the horses won’t. Away with you!” pushing him gently towards the door; “if that is all you have to tell me, away with you, and make yourself ready as fast as you can! Get you gone, young sir!——”

“But, confound it, you won’t let me speak!” protested poor Teddy, already with his face close to the door. “Can’t you listen to me for a single moment, instead of talking the whole time yourself? I tell you I *have* something to say——”

——“Say away, then; only be quick about it.”

“I heard something at Clinkton.”

“What did you hear?”

“It was about—about Challoner.”

“About Mr Challoner?” As quick as lightning there was a change in her face. “About Mr Challoner? Well?”

A pause.

“Go on.”

Another pause.

“What about him?” demanded Matilda, all attention—close, concentrated, unswerving attention now.

Unfortunate Teddy! that swift interest took away the last remains of any desire to communicate.

“Challoner is engaged to be married,” he said in a thick guttural voice, not at all his own. “He is engaged to a Clinkton girl. It is to see her he goes to Clinkton.”

“I heard it first from Whewell,” continued the narrator, eager to continue, now that he had begun. “I went to Whewell the day I left here. That was Tuesday, you know. I went to call on Whewell. I had no idea of anything; I merely went to make a friendly call, as young fellows do, and I happened to say we had Challoner with us, and he said something about his marriage; so then I said we had never heard a syllable about his marriage—for you know we had not.”

A smothered movement.

“Oh, you may trust me. I took care what I said,” proceeded Teddy, comprehending with wonderful

sagacity what was meant. "I took precious good care not to let you down——"

——"Never mind that. Go on."

"Well, I could not help showing that we knew nothing of the marriage; because you know we did know nothing, and Whewell seemed to know everything. Challoner has been engaged since before we ever set eyes upon him,—engaged for three months and more,—and the wedding is to be immediately. Stop! hear me out," as she had raised a pale smiling face for denial—"just you hear me out. I am not going upon Whewell's word—though Whewell is not a bad fellow, and was uncommonly civil to me—but I knew *you* would never believe a thing he said." She nodded to this. "So that was what took me to Clinkton. Whewell told me where Hale lived—that is my friend—and I—I really did not want to see him, you know,—and Whewell thought it would be a good plan."

"He sent you?"

"Sent me? No indeed; I went of my own accord. But it was he who thought of it—— What do you look like that for?" breaking off suddenly.

"Well, I went to Clinkton," continued Teddy, meeting with no reply; "I went the day before yesterday, and found Hale at home the next morning—that was yesterday morning; and just as I was coming away, and they had told me all about it—this marriage, I mean,—who should I fall in with but the very girl herself—I mean, her sister."

"Well?"

"Oh, she told me a heap: I had it all over again from her. It was exactly as Whewell had said; her sister had been engaged to Challoner ever since last September. He had met her first at Lady Fair-

leigh's—you remember he has often spoken of his sister Lady Fairleigh—and they are to be married next month; early next month, the girl said. She was a nice smart-looking girl," quoth Teddy, who was not so particular as Matilda—"an awfully well-got-up girl, and she jabbered away like anything. She said her other sister was engaged too, and that they were going to have a double wedding. She said she had often heard of us. Jem—that was Challoner—had spoken of us when he was there lately. She called Overton 'the Earl,'" said Teddy, with a grin. "She did not know I was 'the Earl's' brother though; I kept that dark. I merely put it to her in a casual sort of way, Had she ever heard of Challoner's friends, the Lessinghams? And I brought in Overton's name when she seemed not quite sure. As soon as she heard Overton's name, she said "Yes" at once, and remarked that they had been very kind to him when he was laid up at their house not long ago. I thought it was as well to be perfectly certain that it really was *our* man, our Challoner that everybody meant," continued Teddy, who, to be sure, had done as well and shown as much sagacity throughout as though he had been the wisest of the wise. "There may be dozens of other Challoners in the world, you know"—which was precisely what Matilda had twice opened her lips to point out,—“but, of course, there could only be one Challoner who knew *us* and was laid up here lately,” proceeded the speaker, “so that settled the matter. And the Hales spoke as if everybody knew about it; and so did the other girl—the sister of the one you know. Her name is Tuffnell. Whewell could not quite get hold of it, but he was sure that it began with a T; and so it did. I said it over to myself lots of times

on the way home, for fear I should forget it, as Whewell did; and I knew you would never believe a word if I forgot the name. But anyhow, *it's true*. You may believe me or not, but I've got it all for you as clear as crystal, and it was all exactly as Whewell said: the whole time Challoner has been here

he has been as good as a married man, and never whispered a syllable about it!"

He paused at length, for there was no more to be said after this.

"Dear! I think he might have told us," said Matilda, taking up her riding-whip.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—MATILDA SHOWS A BRAVE FRONT.

"Vulgar minds refuse, or crouch beneath their load; the brave
Bear theirs without repining."

—MALLET.

Such admirable carelessness was beyond our heroine's simple retainer, and it must be confessed that Teddy's mouth fell open as wide as any ploughboy's when the next minute his sister stepped past him in the doorway and tripped lightly out of sight,—and she had run down-stairs, got upon her horse, and was away from the door, before he had even time to rub his eyes and find his voice.

"But I was going too!" he said at last.

It was too late; my lady was far down the avenue ere he reached the front door, and there was no recalling her.

"What on earth——of course I was going," said he again. "A ride is just what I want, to get this beastly journey out of my head; and now that Challoner is disposed of, she will be glad enough to take me on again. Well, I'll get some luncheon, for I'm as hungry as a hunter, and I can go along presently; I'll catch her up at Endhill. Challoner's settled, that's one comfort; but Matilda was not half so mad as I thought she would have been. I was afraid just at the first she might have been a little upset, but she is such a jolly girl—— Oh, there is something hot, is there?" to a servant,

who came up with the announcement. "In the library? Oh! I'll come. And, I say, tell them to have round Trumpeter by-and-by—in half an hour or so."

Now, how about Matilda? Straight upright she sat in her saddle, her hands grasping the reins with a tension of which she was wholly unaware, a burning spot on each cheek. She was going to Endhill mechanically—going because she had been going before. Before when? Before there was that rushing sound in her ears, that catch in her breath, that cold numbness at her heart. She had been going to Endhill, certainly she had been going to Endhill; and—and—whatever had been going to be must still be.

Nothing had happened,—oh dear, no,—nothing. If—if by any chance Teddy's ridiculous story should be true,—it was most unlikely, most improbable—Teddy never did tell true stories,—but if, if there was the slightest, most distant chance of his having built his absurd charge upon any sort of foundation, why—she would still go to Endhill. There was nothing to keep her from going to Endhill—nothing to deter her from going anywhere, or doing anything,—and she was at her destination

ere she well knew she had started. She had galloped nearly the whole way.

"Who do you think we have got here?" cried Lotta, greeting her mother in the doorway, her voice betraying that the "who" was within earshot. "Mr Whewell," — looking round, — "Mr Whewell, come and show yourself. Mr Whewell, mamma, has just arrived." Lady Matilda had rather a strange look on her face. "We did not know he was coming, for we never got his note," continued Lotta. "I tell him London letters must be posted by half-past five in the afternoon if they are to be delivered here the next morning." (As if the artful rogue did not know as much, and had not planned his manœuvre so as not to be disconcerted by any unfavourable reply.) "So we shall probably get your note, Mr Whewell, while we are at tea," continued Mrs Lotta, running on contentedly, for she had been flattered into good humour by the wily barrister, and now that she had all the talking to herself, turned on the tap graciously. "We shall see it come in, and you will remember for another time. It is so fortunate that we are at home, for we are to be away the whole of next week; and indeed, but for this thaw,——" here Matilda lost her.

From the moment Matilda saw Whewell, hope fled. That bare sight of his face—his triumphant overcharged face, ablaze with information, athirst for opportunity—one single impression of it was enough. She believed every word Teddy had spoken, and believing, not a note in her voice faltered, not a flicker of her eyelids nor a change in her colour betrayed her.

("I am glad I came," was all she said within her heart. "Glad—glad—*glad* I came. Now then—)

"How d'ye do, Robert? Is that baby, Lotta? Ah, my sweet!" clasping him to her bosom,—did she for a moment hide her face in his?—"ah, my bonnie boy! how well he looks, how fast he grows! Never cries with me, you see, my dears. So you have come down to inspect your godson, Mr Whewell," turning to him with graver politeness. "That is quite right, quite as it should be. His other godfather has been here too. He only left us this morning."

"Left you!" exclaimed Whewell, involuntarily.

"Yes, left us for London. He and Teddy must have crossed each other by the way. Teddy is just come; did you come down in the same train with him?"

Whewell had; but he had hidden himself. He had not wished to be recognised, since, above all things, if he were ever to make any way with the lady of his affections again, he must remain in the background now. Now that he had set his puppets working, and that the machinery was in full going order, he must keep aloof, a dispassionate innocent spectator, until the storm had blown by.

Challoner was about to be checkmated, and the desire to see and know how the checkmate was given had proved irresistible. To Endhill he must come, to insert himself into the Hanwells' confidence, and gather from Robert's deportment and Lotta's slips of the tongue how far the affair had gone, and in what aspect it had been viewed by the family in general; but he had sufficient penetration and knowledge of human nature to be aware that nothing could be more detrimental to his own interests than to seem to be cognisant of Matilda's feelings at this juncture, or to pry openly into what might be her shame and sorrow.

That she had not treated Challoner with indifference had been only too manifest, in spite of all poor Teddy's endeavours to conceal as much; whether she had given him her whole heart or not, was another question. It had been quick work if she had; and he had fancied Lady Matilda was not to be quickly won.

Directly he had begun to press his own suit, he had been conscious of that invisible intangible resistance which a woman knows so well how to present, and which is so impossible to surmount or cut through. Immediately Whewell had left behind his open friendly tone for tender asides and soft inquiries, he had felt a difference in his reception both in the boudoir and in the drawing-room; and from this he had drawn the not unnatural conclusion that he had been over-hasty, and that a beauty who knew her own value, and who had doubtless been laid siege to over a score of times, was unlikely to be taken by storm. He should have expected this; and he had more than once blamed himself for his precipitancy, and mused over the wily and wary path he should pursue in future—"Slow and sure" must be his motto.

From this it will be seen that the persevering barrister had by no means given up hopes; and strange to say, Challoner's success—for in his own mind Whewell did not doubt that success—instead of daunting, afforded a curious and subtle encouragement.

Challoner, brainless fool that he was, had found the soft spot in proud Matilda's heart; surely what Challoner could do, he could do. Challoner exposed and defeated, the breach was made, the way open for another.

Only let him be careful not to offend Matilda now, only let her

imagine him unconscious—for well he knew that on unconsciousness her pride would set the highest value—and he might yet ascend to the throne by her side. And never had she seemed more queen-like or more gracious than she did at the moment when such thoughts and such hopes were animating the breast of Challoner's rival.

All of this is a digression, but we wish our readers to perceive with what intent the busy and hard-worked Londoner had forced a holiday upon himself in order to ascertain by the surest method possible, the precise nature of the case which was now foremost in his consideration.

"Did you come down in the same train with Teddy?" inquired Lady Matilda, easily.

"No doubt I did; but, oddly enough, we never came across each other," replied Whewell. "You say he is just arrived? Then how did we miss meeting, I wonder? I mean at this end; of course at the other side—there was such a crowd,—and I was late—he had probably got into his carriage before I arrived. If I had known he was to be there——"

"Oh, I thought you did know?" She looked him quietly in the face as she spoke.

"Certainly I knew—knew he was coming down some time to-day, but there are a number of trains," explained Whewell, who had provided for this; "he did not tell me yesterday, when he called at my rooms, what particular train he meant to catch. I knew he could not get back from Clinkton last night in time to come straight on here; and indeed I thought it very likely that his friend Hale might induce him to remain longer—that is to say, if Hale were at home. Did he find Hale at home?"

"Yes, but he only saw him—or them, for I think he saw all the family—for a very short time. I don't suppose he ever intended to stay; he very seldom cares to go anywhere, and it was just a whim."

"I know. Yes, I believe it was I who unwittingly put it into his head," said Whewell, who, it will be seen, had carefully thought out all his part before. "I hope you were not disappointed by his non-appearance; but he sent the telegram, and the poor fellow seemed dreadfully at a loss for something to do, and so charmed to escape from being snow-bound down here. But the snow is all gone to-day. I never was more surprised than when I got up this morning; the air as warm as summer, and the streets one mass of black slush from end to end. 'Pon my word, even the country is better,"—he stopped, annoyed at his awkwardness.

"Yes, even the country is better," repeated Lady Matilda, with a perfectly amiable smile,—“even this poor dreary country of ours is better sometimes than your enchanting London; and it is better than Clinkton too, Teddy thinks,” stroking the baby's soft little head. (“He is quite good with me, Lotta, I assure you,” in parenthesis.) “Is he not a nice little fellow, Mr Whewell? I am only the grandmother, you know, not the mother, so I may put the question. Are you not proud of him, or of your share in him, whichever it is? Mr Challoner's share is a very small one, by the way, judging from all the claim he lays to it. He is a wretched godfather. He never once came over to see baby this last visit, and now he is gone——”

——“But I never knew he was here!” cried Lotta.

——“Gone, did you say?” repeated Whewell, in a breath.

“I—I understood from your brother that he was at the Hall now,” continued he, in the most natural voice he could muster; “I was looking forward to meeting him.” But Lady Matilda was addressing her daughter.

“Well, my dear Lotta, it was very rude of him, I own; but then, in excuse, I must say that he only ran down to us for a few days, just because Overton had set his heart on having moonlight skating on the home-ponds, and Mr Challoner had never seen night-skating: so when the moon and the ice came together, we got hold of everybody whom we thought would really enjoy it. We knew *you* would not come, and even Robert——”

“Oh, mamma, pray don't ask him. I should be in agonies till I saw Robert safe home again, if he were to go; and of course *I* could not go. Robert would not hear of it.”

“Precisely. That was what we all felt,” assented Matilda; “it was no sort of use asking you; but for people who skate——”

“I am very fond of skating,” began Lotta, “but——”

——“Mr Challoner, for instance, came down from the north on purpose,” continued Lady Matilda, in a perfectly distinct voice, and she looked at Whewell as she spoke.

“Indeed! Lucky fellow! What would I have given—but you never thought of asking me; and indeed last week it would have been of no use—I could not have come by any possibility nor for any attraction,” emphatically. “But Challoner, has he—is he off for good?”

“He has only gone to town to-day; he is to meet his sister, Lady Fairleigh, there,—take care, baby, don't get my watch-chain into your eyes,—and they will want to go north together.”

"Ah, to Clinkton," said Whewell, significantly.

"To Clinkton, yes. His *fiancée* lives at Clinkton, you know—(baby, baby, you little mischief! see, Lotta, he has pulled down my hair)."

"What do you mean about his *fiancée*?" demanded Lotta, in blunt amazement. "Is Mr Challoner engaged to be married?"

"Mrs Hanwell had not heard of it, then?" observed Whewell, whom nothing escaped. "Had you heard, Hanwell?" wheeling round his chair as the door opened, for Robert had been out making arrangements for the comfort of his unexpected guest. "Had you heard about Challoner?"

"What about Challoner? No, I have not heard anything about him."

"Not about his marriage?"

"His marriage! No. Is he going to be married? I had no idea of it, nor had any of us."

"My dear Robert, I have just been telling Lotta the reason he has been so remiss in not coming over here. You see, we have been so shut up, and the roads have been so bad ever since the snow fell, and Mr Challoner only came the day before the snow fell," murmured Lady Matilda, not very coherently; but coherence was perhaps the last thing to be desired, all things considered.

"Oh, I beg your pardon; you knew about it, then?" inferred her son-in-law very naturally. "He has been with you lately; is he with you still?"

"He comes down again this evening; but I should think he will rejoin his sister either to-morrow or next day."

"And—and you knew of this engagement?" proceeded Robert, with the stolid tread of an elephant on the delicate ground; and he was not ignorant that the ground

was delicate either, for as he spoke he breathed slightly, drew up his brows, and looked round at each in turn before he stole a glance at Lady Matilda. He had had his own ideas about Lady Matilda,—ideas which were too distasteful to be imparted even to his wife, but which had been forced upon his dull perceptions in spite of himself, and of every argument he could think of on the other side. He had felt that there was something, although he could scarcely have defined what—but that there was something, *something* going on at Overton Hall; and that, whatever that something was, Challoner was at the bottom of it.

"Oh, it is an old story, as stories go," said Whewell, with an interposition for which he hoped Matilda would be grateful,—*"a three months' old story, at any rate,"* getting up and ostensibly addressing his host, but in reality talking at and for one person only. "Three months is an age in these rapid times. I knew all about it long ago, and thought that of course you did too."

"No indeed."

"Not when you had him down here in November—I mean last month? It seems so long since I was here, I can hardly think it was only last month. Did he not tell you then?"

"No."

"Odd that he said nothing. But some men are extraordinarily shy about these matters, and Challoner is just that sort of reserved fellow. It was not from himself that I heard it—it came to me in quite a roundabout way; and then, when I recollected that the subject had not been mentioned openly among you, I concluded that he had not cared to be talked about. But I thought that of course you knew. The engagement was young then."

"Perhaps he was not engaged then." The bright thought was Lotta's.

"Oh, he was; he certainly was," said Whewell, sharply. "Everybody knew it. And no doubt," markedly and exclusively now addressing Matilda—"no doubt your brother heard the thing mentioned at Clinkton yesterday. He did? Yes, I was sure he would. He went to the Hales', and the Hales are the Tufnells' particular friends. Tufnell is the name, I remember now. I could not recollect it when your brother asked me: I could only give him the fact, not the details."

"Pray spare them to us also," cried the lady, with a yawn. "Pray, Mr Whewell, if you have any compassion on us poor country-folks, who never hear a thing, and never see a human being, tell us the news, *on dits*, the scandal of the town, and don't, *don't* be prosy. It is delightful of you to have catered for us this—this charming piece of gossip, and we only beg you not to spoil it by too much skill and pains. It would be a pity——"

"But I really want to know," broke in Lotta, who had scarcely yet recovered from her astonishment. "Do, mamma, just let Mr Whewell tell us the rest."

"The rest, my child? What does 'the rest' consist of? What can remain? Is it not enough when Mr Whewell can furnish even the name?" said Matilda, with a bitterness she struggled in vain totally to conceal: "he has been so good as to leave nothing to our imagination; in another minute you will be in possession of a complete list of the wedding guests——"

——"I could get it, I believe," said Whewell, laughing. "The wedding is to take place immediately, and if Mrs Hanwell has any curiosity——"

"I want to know who and what she is," said Lotta, plainly.

"She is a banker's daughter—a banker's very pretty daughter, I believe," replied her informant, with a malicious enjoyment in the saying it,—"*quite* young, barely twenty, rich, and—and all the rest of it. A lucky match for Challoner, no doubt, and one that is not to be made every day."

"I am going up-stairs to have a private confab with nurse," announced Lady Matilda almost directly after this. "Stay where you are, Lotta; you are not to come,—don't you understand? Nurse and I can arrange all about the new cloak and hood without you; the new winter cloak and hood I promised, you know. It is time the little master had it, and it is to be a dead secret from everybody else until it appears. So just stop where you are, my dear; I will come down when I am ready," peeping in at the door after she had left the room.

That coming down proved to be harder than anything she had yet had to do. Animation was beginning to return, she was coming to herself as out of a dull deadly stupor, when the time came for again facing the drawing-room; and the party there had not separated, as she had half hoped they might have done: they were still herding together, three against one, as she felt them to be; and the poor one, inwardly quivering in every fibre, had again to assume unconsciousness and light-heartedness, and endeavour to cheat, elude, and throw off the scent,—well aware that with one, at least, of those present no endeavour would avail. That Whewell knew all, she was now certain.

But she played her part bravely and well that dismal December day. Without flinching for a moment,

or for a moment relinquishing that firm hold on herself which it was all in all with her now to maintain, Lady Matilda turned to one and another, never pausing, never trusting herself even to consider what must next come to pass—how she should enact the same again in the Overton drawing-room with another three around her—how to meet, and greet, and part with Challoner for ever.

This would require every power she possessed; but she had none as yet to spare for the future, until the future should make demands for its own necessity.

At length escape came, and gaily waving her hand, and smiling to the last, Matilda rode off rapidly on the road towards the sea. Teddy had not appeared—he had been detained—and she was thus far spared to solitude and misery.

“Are you going by the downs, my lady?” It was the groom who had ridden up—respectful, suggestive remonstrance audible in the question.

“Yes.” He had never heard my lady speak so haughtily in his life. She motioned him back like an empress,—but he would try again.

“The ground will be very soft, my lady; the heavy thaw——”

He fell back; he had been made to fall back by a gesture which admitted of no further parley,—where his mistress led, it was for him to follow, and his business began and ended there. So Charles understood, and whatever he might think, he durst no more molest. What did Matilda care though the ground were soft and the thaw heavy? The ground and the thaw were nothing to her. Soft? Heavy? She wondered what the words meant. Her *heart* was heavy—heavy like a stone, and as hard,—no softness about it,—

and she had lingered so long at Endhill, had been so resolute in her bravado there, that to go straight home now, was to meet and confront Challoner within the hour, and without hope of escape. No, she could not do that yet, could not face that traitor yet.

He would hear where she had gone, would inquire instantly, and be told; and should she take the direct road to the Hall, she would find him in all probability coming to meet her, or lying in wait at the front door ready to propose a garden stroll or a musical hour. Oh, what should she say? What could she say? How answer, how look, and not betray her secret? It was but yesterday he had trembled before her; it was her turn to tremble now.

She must not meet him alone; that was the one thing clear in the tumult of her thoughts: and to achieve this she must be out late, take the roundabout route by the downs, only get in after Overton and Teddy were sure also to have returned, then hurry to her room, and a word to each brother before the party assembled for dinner would be all that was needed.

They would congratulate the happy man; Teddy would inform him of his expedition; Challoner would understand, without occasion for anything being said that could cause a breath of unpleasantness,—oh, it would be all smiles and amiability,—and the next day he would depart, and be to them as though he had never been.

The wild western wind blew about the scattered curls which Lotta's baby had dishevelled, but no wind could cool the burn on Matilda's scalding brow. The dark sea rolled in thunder along the cliffs below, but she only heard that din in her ears, that rushing in her veins. The gulls flew and

shrieked overhead; she looked, and there was a thick blinding mist before her eyes.

Here and there she came to a point on the cliff where the weight of water, from the extent and rapidity of the thaw, had forced down the soft sandstone, and the most serious of these landslips was scarcely passed when the groom, unable longer to keep silence, again rode up, at the risk of a reprimand, to warn his mistress of the danger of approaching near to an edge so treacherous.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, she had barely turned her head to listen, when a loud shout from in front rang through the gloom, so startling in its vehemence and nearness, that both horses swerved violently aside, and Matilda, who had but a negligent seat at the moment, was thrown with force to the ground.

The next instant the figure of a man appeared running to the spot.

"Good God! what have I done?" exclaimed a voice.

It was Challoner's.

CHAPTER XXXV.—OFF HIS GUARD AT LAST.

"A word unspoken is like the sword in the scabbard, thine; if vented, thy sword is in another's hand."—QUARLES.

Challoner, as Matilda had divined he would, had started to meet her on her return from Endhill.

Tolerably well content with a visit to town which had produced no results either good or evil—for he had seen nothing of his sister, and had obtained no tidings of her beyond ascertaining that her rooms had been engaged at the hotel, but that nothing further had been heard, and no orders received,—content so far, and right willing to be left in the dark for as long as Lady Fairleigh chose, her brother had hurried back to the one place on earth for him that day, and arriving to find all the party out, he had acted precisely as a lover under happier auspices should have done.

A mile and a half of the high-road having, however, brought no Lady Matilda into view, and the gloom of the winter afternoon deepening every minute, Challoner had hesitated about proceeding, for it had seemed unlikely that the riders should not have been met by that time, unless they had followed some

other route. Could they be returning by the downs?

The suggestion had hardly arisen in his mind ere it had been confirmed by his falling in with some of the Endhill farm-servants who had come clattering along at a good pace in an empty cart, and who had readily shouted out that they had seen the horses take the turning towards the sea.

That was enough; he had instantly cut across a field, and a few minutes more had brought him to the well-known path over the downs which he and Matilda had so often traversed.

She certainly could not have passed, if what the labourers had stated were correct, and he had been justly confident of intercepting her, perhaps of persuading her to send on her horse with the groom, and walk the rest of the way home—a short two miles,—it would be a pleasant change; he had thought she would not refuse.

But waiting where he could command the best view of the path, Challoner had been struck,

as Lady Matilda's attendant had been, by the numerous landslips along the coast; and one crack in particular, more extensive than the rest, and plainly indicating that the loosened soil would fall ere long, had fixed his attention, and distracted it even from Matilda for a few minutes. He had walked forward to the brink of the cliff in order to discover whether or no any had actually given way; in the inquiry he had become engrossed for the moment; and the approaching horses making no sound with their hoofs on the soft moist sod, he had neither heard nor seen them till they were too near for him to do more than raise a cry of warning.

The danger was evident; two heavy animals going at a round pace over the already insecure spot would certainly imperil themselves and their riders, and one of the two bore Matilda! His shout was almost a scream, for though himself wellnigh undistinguishable from the surrounding scrub and brushwood in the dusky light, he had instantly recognised her, her outline showing plainly against a lurid wintry sunset.

She now lay motionless and unconscious before him.

"Matilda!" cried Challoner, raising her in his arms—Matilda! Oh, fool that I was! I have killed her by my own act. No, she is breathing yet; she is but stunned by the fall. There is no stone she can have hit her head against," looking round. "There is nothing; and the hat may have been a protection, though it is off now. But who can tell how and where the hurt may be, especially if—oh, if she would but open her eyes! This is dreadful. I have nothing—and there is nowhere——"

"There is the coast-guard'sman's house up yonder, sir," said the

groom, who had dismounted in order to recover his lady's horse, and who now came up on foot, holding the reins of both. "Is my lady very bad, sir? The ground is so soft——"

"See for yourself," sharply. "Where is the house you spoke of?"

"Just by here, sir. We passed it not half a minute ago. Shall I go on and get some one, sir?"

"Go on, and say I am bringing your mistress there. Look sharp. You will have to go for the doctor next thing."

He raised his helpless burden in his arms. The house was even nearer than the man had thought, and they were there immediately.

"Brandy!" cried Challoner, laying Matilda on the little couch of the room into which he was ushered. "Brandy! Quick! A good dose——"

—"Oh, sir," remonstrated the female, who appeared to be host and hostess in one, but who was all helpless amazement and consternation,—“oh, sir, my husband is the coast-guard'sman, sir——"

—"Never mind what he is. Do, for heaven's sake——"

—"Brandy, sir, we never have," reproachfully.

"What *do* you have? Anything—only be quick——"

At length he got what he little expected, a spoonful of sal-volatile, with many explanations as to the medical man's orders about the same, which, we need hardly say, were spoken to deaf ears.

"Shall your servant fetch the doctor now, sir, he wishes to know?" were the first words conveying any impression to the mind of the distracted Challoner.

"Doctor? Fetch the doctor? Do you mean to say he has not gone yet?" he began, savagely,—but on a sudden he stopped short. Something had happened.

"I believe she is coming round," murmured the speaker to himself. "Certainly that was a sigh. And there, she sighs again." "Matilda," in a whisper—"Matilda." Then raising himself and turning round, "Send off the groom at once. Tell him to fetch the doctor, and also a carriage from the Hall. Do you understand? He is first to get the doctor, and then the carriage. Tell him to be off at once. And, I say, just shut the door, will you?"

"Is the lady better, sir?"

"Better? Yes. She must be quiet now, please," impatiently.

"Is there nothing I can do, sir?"

"Nothing—nothing—nothing, thank you. She will be all right presently. Kindly leave us now. I will fetch you if——" The words died away. The sufferer had unclosed her eyes, but neither she nor Challoner noticed that the door softly closed, and that they were alone; a thousand prying eyes would scarce have been heeded at that moment.

"Matilda," whispered he—he was still kneeling by her side, enfolding her in his arms,—*"Matilda, do you know me, my darling? Oh, my darling, look, look again! See, it is I. And I thought I had killed you—I did indeed. Are you hurt, dearest? Are you in pain?"* trembling for her answer. *"What? I can't hear. Just whisper. See, draw a breath. Tell me, does that hurt? You shake your head. Oh, thank God!—what! not anywhere—not anywhere? Heaven be thanked! I can scarce believe it. I thought those dear eyes might never——"* he could not finish.

"Oh, my love!—my own love," he burst forth again, "to think that I, I who would lay down my life for your dear sake—that I should have been the one to do so cruel a

thing! How I hate myself! But you, you will not hate me, will you, darling? Nay, don't move. I *must* have you, must hold you thus, else I shall think, shall feel as if—stay, dearest," passionately; "see, you are in my arms. It is I," his lips pressed her cheek.

"*This is I,*" he breathed in her ear.

A faint sob, a gasping shivering sigh escaped beneath the touch.

"Good heavens, you *are* hurt!" exclaimed Challoner, again alarmed. "Something has struck you—you are concealing it from me! Oh, where? Tell me how and what you feel, and—oh, my dearest, tell me——"

Again that convulsive shudder.

"Is this position painful?" inquired he. "Can I ease it in any way? Lean on me, put your arms round my neck—what? Oh, I have been too bold. I know it. I am beginning to recollect now, but—but—I will not, I cannot care: I will think only of you, not of myself. What can I do for you now? Are you deceiving me? If I only knew that——" anxiety again arising.

"No."

"She had spoken at last.

"It is you, not I," said poor Matilda, struggling for sense and coherency. "You are the one who——" she fell back again upon her pillow.

It was obvious, however, that she had not relapsed into unconsciousness, and Challoner, whose fears were allayed anew, contented himself with fond murmurs and soothing assurances, while he again and again assured the passive listener of his presence and of his love. It seemed as though his tongue, thus loosened and set free at last, could not stint itself, could never cease to exclaim and endear; and as the motionless form of Ma-

tilda, still confused and bewildered, yielded involuntarily to his embrace, his passion found vent unchecked for some minutes, and past and future were swallowed up in the too exquisite present.

Then all at once he felt a movement different from any the sufferer had yet made. "Let me get up," she said, faintly. "Let me sit up. I—I want to speak."

"You are hardly fit to speak yet, dearest," replied Challoner, his deep tones full of tenderness. "What! You really wish to change your position? Gently, then; let me support you——"

"No, don't support me, Mr Challoner," said Matilda, quietly; "I would rather—you—did not."

He withdrew his arm, but remained kneeling before her.

"Do you not understand?" he said.

"I understand; yes. But we ought to understand each other, I think. Will you please get up?"

"Dear," said Challoner, laying his hand on hers—"dear, you speak strangely; you do not know what you are saying——"

—A smile woke up upon her face—a smile so woful, so wintry, that it chilled the very blood in his veins, for it seemed to him the smile of one distraught; and his fears at once led him to attribute any wandering of the mind to the recent fall, whose ill effects had not yet been fully ascertained.

"You are—are——" he stammered in new agitation.

"I am not mad," replied Matilda; "I am not mad. I——" putting her hand to her head, as one awakening to the sharp reaction which follows on the heels of a narcotic—"would you mind repeating once again what you said just now?"

"What I said just now?"

"About me."

"About you, my dearest?"

"Yes, that's it; about me, your 'dearest.' Well?"

"Lie down again, sweet one," said Challoner, soothingly; "lie down here, as you were before. Nay, don't put me away. I will say it all—anything you wish, only——" again attempting to draw her towards him.

"You will?" cried Matilda, suddenly springing up and thrusting him back with a look of horror. "You will? And you would dare? What?" panting out each word as she had strength for it. "Dare to—touch me? to insult me? to perjure—yourself? You would? Have you—no shame? no pity? no—no—oh, God forgive you, Mr Challoner, for I never can." She covered her face with her hands, and he heard her sobbing behind them.

It may seem incredible, but until that moment it had never crossed Challoner's mind that anything could have occurred since he had left Overton in the morning, when Matilda had followed him to the door, and waved to him from the doorstep. He now understood it all; his hands fell by his side; he stood up, and his face changed.

"If you please, is the lady better?" inquired a voice without. "I thought I heard you calling, sir. Do you feel better, ma'am? Deary me!" cried the good woman, beholding Matilda's averted face and heaving bosom—"deary me! she is bad. But that's always the way with the 'sterics, they say, sir," turning to the gentleman; "and 'sterics after an accident comes natural! It will do the poor thing good to cry a bit."

Without a word, Challoner led the speaker to the door, for she had advanced to the sofa, and was standing in contemplation of the

unhappy Matilda, as she thus delivered her opinion.

"You think she had best not be meddled with, sir? And to be sure, I bain't no great hand at doctoring. Well-a-well! Then you'll kindly call again if you want anything? There's more of the sal-volatile;" but the door had closed.

Challoner had closed it. Then he went and stood by the window, and heard the gusts of wind pass by. It seemed as if there were nothing left for him to do now. All was over, and he found himself dully wondering how it had ever gone on so long.

"Mr Challoner?"

He turned.

"If you have anything—to say," said Lady Matilda, in a hoarse whisper—"I should like—I should wish—I will hear it before we part now, and part for ever. This shameful scene may end now. Be quick; I wish to be alone. Be quick—and—go."

"Lady Matilda——" he stopped.

"Well?"

"I have nothing to say."

"Nothing, Mr Challoner?—*nothing*?"

He bowed.

"You have *nothing* to say," she proceeded, with a slow frown gathering over her brow; "and yet I was more than 'Lady Matilda' just now. I was—was I not?—all that was most dear, most beloved; and you have 'nothing' to say now? Say *something*, sir—you can surely think of *something*," cried she, with rising anger; "you were ready enough with your falsehoods a few minutes ago."

"They were no falsehoods," murmured Challoner almost inaudibly.

She stopped to listen, and listened on until he spoke again.

"They were no falsehoods. *You*

know that. For the rest, I repeat, I have nothing to say."

"You cannot even defend yourself."

"I will not defend myself."

"By heavens!" burst forth Matilda in a passion of irrepressible scorn—"by heavens! this is the man who says he loves me, and swears I am dear to him—who had almost made me forget myself, and—and—oh, what am I saying? I that have been so duped, so deceived—I that would have——" suddenly her hands came together, and she wrung them in her agony.

Challoner's lips moved, but no sound escaped them.

"He loves me and weds another," cried Matilda, beginning again. "He kisses me, and vows to her. I am only one of two; and she, the other, has the prior claim. She, poor girl, has the right to this man—this hypocrite: she can claim him—thank God it is she, and not I. Go to her, Mr Challoner," gathering fresh disdain with every sentence—"go quickly, lest another come in your way, and you are tempted again, and—and—oh, go to her; she knows nothing as yet. There is plenty of time. Go, and she will receive you with open arms; she suspects nothing. The marriage is to be immediately,—oh, I know all about it. She is very confiding; she does not ask where Mr Challoner passes his time when he is not at Clinkton; she likes him to enjoy himself, and make the most of his antenuptial holiday—oh, poor girl, poor girl!" cried the speaker, dropping all at once her accents of bitter mockery—"poor—poor—miserable—ill-fated girl——"

Challoner raised his head, and looked out of the window.

"Is she, too, your 'dearest'? Is she also your love?" The

wretched Matilda was struggling for a hold on her emotions. "Is she—is she——"

No reply.

"Speak!" shrieked Matilda, and fell back on the sofa, senseless.

When she came again to herself, all was as before, and consciousness returning more speedily than at first, she became almost at once aware of Challoner's presence at her side, and his voice close to her ear sent an involuntary thrill throughout her frame. Challoner was using restoratives, which he had instantly procured; and as soon as he perceived these to be no longer needed, he retreated a pace, and assumed the tone of a physician.

"You must not again exert yourself, Lady Matilda, or the consequences may really be serious. You must be so good as to remain perfectly quiet now. No one will come in, and I—I shall not annoy you."

Presently he saw the tears flowing over her cheeks. "If I have been unjust to you," she murmured, "say it."

He could not say it.

"If you have not deceived two women who trusted you, and who could have—loved you, say it."

Again he could not.

"Only one thing," implored she, fixing on him her eye—could he ever in years to come forget the anguish depicted in that dark, full, swimming eye?—"only one thing: *which?*"

Then she knew by his face which, and hid her own.

("If I could only leave her

now," thought Challoner, in justice to whom it must be said that fear of the effect a continuance of such emotions might have on the unhappy Matilda in her present state predominated; "my being here—but I cannot go till I have seen her in better hands. I cannot go, unless she herself sends me. Will that carriage ever come?")

Then he heard his name again, and took a swift resolution.

"Lady Matilda," he said, "I—I had better go. I cannot see you, hear you, be with you thus, and keep my senses longer. Because I have played the fool, I need not play the madman, and—shall I go?"

He almost thought she would have said "No." He hardly yet knew Matilda.

"Yes, go," she answered, solemnly—"go to her whom you have wronged still more cruelly than you have wronged me. She has not even your love—such as it is. Go to her, and on your knees, in the sight of God, tell her the truth at last. Promise before God to be false to her no more. She may forgive you,—some women are forgiving,—I," said Matilda, and a pale light fell on her face from without—"I am not one of them."

After a short pause, she held out her hand; he knelt, overpowered by his own bitter feelings to take it—it may have been but a few seconds, it may have been longer—"Go, go," she whispered faintly,—and deaf and dumb and blind to all beside, out into the cold wet dusk he went.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—ALL GONE IN AN HOUR.

"Fortune makes quick despatch, and in a day
May strip you bare as beggary itself."

—CUMBERLAND.

"Oh Lord, Mr Challoner, Mr Edward is over the cliff!"

"Over the devil! What are you talking about?"

Challoner threw off roughly a man who seized upon him as he emerged from the cottage, and in whom he scarcely recognised Lady Matilda's usually silent and attentive groom Charles, the same whom he had himself despatched for aid so shortly before, but who with affrighted countenance and disordered speech was now full of a new disaster.

"Oh Lord, sir,—it's true, sir!" cried he. "It's Mr Edward, sir. He was riding along the downs here just now, and——"

"Mr Edward is not at home, you fool."

"He is, sir,—he was, sir,—oh what am I saying? He was at home only an hour ago; but he'll never be at home any more,—oh Lord, and he such a fine gentleman!"

"Speak sense, can't you?" he was shaken rudely by the shoulder. "What has happened? What——"

"It was to Endhill he went first, sir,—he went before you came home, Mr Challoner; then you went the same way, but you came down the byroad,—but Mr Edward, he rides straight home again as soon as ever he finds my lady not there; and then, when he finds her not at home neither, and hears you was off to meet her, he falls a-swearing,"—the man was too much excited to care what he said,—"and nothing would serve him but to be off after you."

"And he has been thrown too?"

And all this time—where is he all this time?"

"Oh Lord, sir, it's no use now! They are all there—my lord, and all of them——"

—"Oh," said Challoner, stopping short.

"'Twas right along here he was coming, sir, him and Trumpeter—the coast-guard see them going along like anything—and all in a minute down they went, not twenty yards from the place where you ran out upon us, sir. It was a slip, sure enough, sir; and you was right enough, and there they are both lying now,—oh Lord! oh Lord!" and the poor fellow broke off, blubbering like an infant.

"Stop that, confound you!" said Challoner, who had himself had about as much as he could bear. "Stop that, and—what the deuce does it all mean? I don't understand," putting up his hand to his hot head.

"The place is close by, sir," Charles made an effort and began again,—“a little bit of a slip that wouldn't ha' hurt a fly if Mr Edward had been walking,—he'd ha' had a tumble, and no harm done; but it was that great brute of a horse—he never would ride nothing but Trumpeter—and the men says they went down like a flash, and Mr Edward's neck's broke, and Trumpeter, they are going to shoot him—oh Lord!”—with a start and a fresh outbreak as the report of a gun close at hand carried its own interpretation to the minds of both. "Oh—oh—oh," began the groom——

—"If you don't hold that d——d tongue of yours," said

Challoner, in a cold, dangerous tone, "I'll pitch you down the place after them, and you may break your neck too, if you choose. Tell me the rest, and tell it, in God's name, so that I can understand. Is Mr Edward killed?"

"Never spoke nor moved since they got at him, sir," sobbed the man—"never raised so much as a finger; and his head's all a-hanging down, and Mr Whewell, he says——"

"*Whewell!*"

"Mr Whewell is there, and them all, sir."

"*Whewell!* I must be mad. Go on—*go on!* *Whewell!* Who next?"

"My lord is just standing by as if he never would move or speak again in this world; and Mr Hanwell, 'twas he sent me to tell you: they are afraid of *her* hearing," looking back at the cottage, "so I was to get at you quiet—that was how we was so long, sir; and see here, sir, here's the very place; and Mr Whewell says there ain't no hope whatever, for he has been dead this half-hour. Oh Lord!"—under his breath—"and such a little bit of a slip too!"

"Do you say, do you mean that it was this very place that I warned you off which gave way with him?" said Challoner, a new and strange vibration in his pulses. "Good God! And if I had been five minutes later——"

"We'd ha' been down as sure as fate, Mr Challoner. Two of us—and there was only one of he! Oh Lord! the ground must ha' been just like a piece of rotten cake, it must. Oh, I told her ladyship twice the ground warn't fit to go on; but she'd no more listen to me than——"

—"And it was *here?*" continued Challoner, unheeding,—"here?" his tone betraying the

awe and horror in his breast. "And is that—I can't see——" straining his eyeballs to pierce the gloom,—"*is that them?*"

"Them it is, sir!" He was responded to in a whisper as low as his own, for the group which had gathered around the dead man was not a couple of hundred yards off.

Challoner stood still with compressed lips.

"Aren't you going on, sir?"

No reply.

"They are expecting you, sir."

Still no movement.

"I was sent to bring you——"

—"Tchah! Be quiet, can't you?" He could have struck the fellow for his officious and intolerable suggestions. "You go down to your master and say—I am coming—or, stop——"

"My lord sees you; he is coming towards us, sir."

Whatever Challoner had intended doing was thus perforce set aside. The two hands met; there was a silence, with averted faces; then, without a word, they stumbled forward together over the loose clods and turf to the fatal spot.

Here were assembled what seemed to be quite a large number of men and boys, a spectral group of figures in the dim light,—for those who had beheld the accident had, in terrified haste, made it known far and wide without loss of an instant—and the result was, that the first confused impression Challoner's overstrained faculties received was that he was confronted by every face he had ever seen or known at Overton. That so many people had been so quickly got together in such a lonely spot was his next foolish wonder.

The truth was, he had no idea how long a time had elapsed since he had last known or cared anything about what was going on in

the outer world. For him there had only been one thought, one agony. Within that little room he had been living a great death; and in the retrospect, all the bitterness of that bitter dream might have been concentrated into a single drop. He had destroyed the sense of time.

In reality, however, a full hour had gone by.

The landslip had taken place within a very short time of his having seen that it was impending, having been doubtless precipitated by the weight and force of a horse and rider; and now all that was left of the young life so ruthlessly cut short were cold inanimate remains, already growing stiff in death. That the end had been instantaneous was apparent, and this was the only sad consolation.

"Went down with the slip," whispered one of the sailors in Challoner's ear, as he and Lord Overton mutely joined the group. "We, my mates and I, was up there, and saw him come ridin' hard along the bank; and as he went by, one of our chaps says, 'That's too near,' and we turned to look. I don't know if we hol-lared to him or not; the next thing was, Bill here cried, 'He's down!' and we down with our things and after him as hard as we could run. Soon as we get to the top, we sees him lyin' just where he is now, and we all come down—for 'tis easy enough to get at it, ye see—and as soon as we come nigh the gentleman, I says to Bill," in a still deeper whisper, "says I, 'He's done for.' Knowed it fra the first, by the way he was lyin'. The horse was over there, throwin' out his legs——"

"How soon did you get down?"

"Warn't two seconds, sir. Less time than it takes tellin', we was all here; and we lifted him up and

pulled open his collar, and one of them fetched water, and we turned him this way and that way,—no use, no use," shaking his head mournfully, "not a breath was left in his body; and that gentleman there says, 'tis the neck that's broke. He must ha' pitched right on to it, over the horse's head. The slip's nothing—bits like that is always comin' away; and now, with all the snow that's been on it, and soakin' into it for days and days, one would ha' thought any gentleman about here would ha' knowed to keep off the edge. They say he is the Earl of Overton's brother. Bill says so. I'm new to these parts, though I've lived along the coast all my days. It's the same coast all along. Well, the Lord's will be done, poor lad. And the horse too!"

Dumbly Challoner stood. He did not hear much, he did not feel much—that is to say, he was not conscious of feeling. Now that the woful scene before him began solemnly to assert its right to a place, to *the* place in his mind, from very excess and complexity of emotions he found himself gradually becoming calm. Bareheaded in the cold rain, and with the salt air blowing on his brow, he stood with the rest, tongue-tied and petrified, gazing on the dead.

Poor, beautiful, unfortunate Teddy! Hapless brother,—Matilda's brother,—her care, her charge, the object of her tenderness, the solace of her loneliness. This was all that was left to her now. One brief hour had robbed her on this side and on that—had snatched by different ways a brother and a lover: cruel fate had struck her twice with deadly aim ere she had had time to draw a breath between.

At intervals he heard the hoarse whispering of the men, who were

uneasily endeavouring to recollect or suggest anything appropriate to the scene; but even these by degrees died away, for one and all had already looked, and touched, and felt the cold limp hands, and listened at the fallen lips, and had severally drawn back with a shadow upon their rough weather-beaten faces. They were now solemnly still, or only broke the silence to groan a smothered ejaculation and heave a sigh.

At length Whewell rose.

He had been kneeling upon the wet turf, supporting in his arms the lifeless clay, and in his own active mind, even while thus engaged, considering what might best be done for the afflicted family,—how information should be given to the authorities, the shock softened to Lady Matilda, Lord Overton spared more painful effort than was needful—how, in short, everything should be done that could be done to mitigate the terrors of the scene.

To explain how he and Robert Hanwell came there, we must just inform our readers that they had been met on the road between Endhill and Overton, and had been informed of the disaster even before tidings had been carried to the Hall. Robert had undertaken to be himself the bearer of these, while Whewell had at once hastened to the fatal spot. He now rose and addressed Challoner.

"We want to get Lord Overton away," he said in a low aside. "There is really nothing to be done, poor fellow; it has been all over some time—indeed there is not a doubt that the end was instantaneous, for the neck is broken, and these men say he has never stirred since. If Lord Overton would go; but Hanwell does not like to press him—could you?"—inquiringly.

"Yes—what?" replied Challoner, struggling to be equally clear-sighted. "What—ah—do you want?"

"Get Lord Overton away. Tell him there is nothing to be done. It is nonsense Hanwell's saying he does not like to intrude; we are all getting wet through, and the night is coming on. It will be difficult enough as it is. Get him away now, if you can; and Lady Matilda——"

Challoner looked up sharply.

"Where is she?" continued the speaker, with a sudden change of tone.

Challoner turned away.

"If we don't take care, some of these fools will blurt it all out to her as it stands, and there will be the devil to pay if they do," said Whewell, shortly. "You know where Lady Matilda is? They say she has been thrown from her horse too. Is that the case?"

"Yes."

"Hurt?"

"No."

"I will take Lord Overton to the cottage where his sister is," said Challoner, after a moment's hesitation. "I will show him the place and leave him there. Then I will go on to the Hall——"

—"Ay, and tell them to have a room ready—you understand? Yes, that will do. Hanwell and I can wait here; we shan't go near the Overtons——"

—"Certainly not," said Challoner, with a scowl.

"And you will not either," observed Whewell, coolly. "They will be best by themselves. Look sharp, Challoner. I believe I hear the carriage——"

Challoner, without a word, put his hand through Lord Overton's arm, and led him unresistingly away.

"You are not going at once?"

It is an hour later, and the scene is once more laid in Overton Hall. Challoner has intimated that he is about to depart—he is no more needed; the tramp of feet has died away along the dim old gallery; the doors are shut; the voices are hushed; the weeping attendants, who shroud one silent chamber, move noiselessly hither and thither as they perform their last sad services to the dead. Just across the passage, with only a few feet between, lies another form almost as white, almost as cold, scarcely more alive than he. Below, Robert Hanwell and his friends sit in mute and doleful assemblage; and no one knows where Overton is.

"You are not going at once?" says Robert, whom circumstances thus compel to act the host. "It is seven o'clock, and you have had nothing—you must indeed oblige yourself to eat something, Challoner," apologetically; "you will be ill."

"I couldn't, thanks. I shall catch the evening train by going now. Don't say anything to any one. Good-bye."

"Good-bye. But I am sure if Lord Overton knew——"

Challoner hears no more. In the outer hall he encounters Overton, and again they confront each

other point-blank without chance of escape.

"Yes, I understand. I do not ask you to stay." It is Overton who speaks. "I understand." He puts his hand to his eyes, turns away, comes back again, and holds it out. Challoner takes it, wrings it, wrenches it as though he never could let it go. It will, he says, never be offered to him again. He will never see that kindly face again. He will never more cross that threshold. His memory will be blotted out, his name be unmentioned. Oh that it had been he, and not the other, who on that night had been taken!

. . . When he arrives at his rooms, he finds a telegram which he ought to have had before, and which explains why Lady Fairleigh had not kept her appointment with him in the afternoon. He has almost forgotten that she had not done so. He reads the telegram stupidly. Reads that his father, who is at Paris, is dangerously ill, and that his presence is desired there at once. Reads, and feels that even this sad intelligence hardly concerns him at all. Wonders if anything else will ever concern him in this world again,—and thinks—not.

No. He thinks not.

NEW VIEWS OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS: THE "OTHER POET"
IDENTIFIED.

AMONG the Sonnets of Shakespeare there is a group—LXXVIII.—LXXXVI.—in which frequent and emphatic allusion is made to another poet and to his writings. "It is entirely unknown," says Palgrave, "to what contemporary poet Shakespeare alludes." In the 86th sonnet, "the same poet appears to be charged with magical practices, like those of Dr Dee. To commentators interested in discovering the groundwork of the Sonnets, these hints should supply a clue."¹ This is all the information respecting the other poet, given by Palgrave in his edition of the Sonnets. Taking up the "clue" spoken of by Palgrave, Professor Dowden thus writes:—

"A clue which promises to lead us to clearness, and then deceives us into deeper twilight, is the characterisation of a rival poet who, for a time, supplanted Shakespeare in his patron's regard. This rival, the better spirit of LXXX., was learned, LXXVIII.; dedicated a book to Shakespeare's patron, LXXXII.; celebrated his beauty and knowledge, LXXXII.; in hymns, LXXXV.; was remarkable for 'the proud full sail of his great verse,' LXXXVI., LXXX.; was taught 'by spirits' to write 'above a mortal pitch,' was nightly visited by an 'affable familiar ghost,' who 'gulled him with intelligence,' LXXXVI. Here are allusions and characteristics which ought to lead to identification. Yet in the end we are forced to confess that the poet remains as dim a figure as the patron. Is it Spenser? He was learned, but what ghost was that which gulled him? Is it Marlowe? His verse was proud and full, and the creator of Faustus may well have had dealings with his own Mephistopheles, but Marlowe died in 1593,

the year of 'Venus and Adonis.' Is it Drayton, or Nash, or John Davies of Hereford? Persons in search of an ingeniously improbable opinion may choose any one of these. Daniel's reputation stood high; he was regarded as a master by Shakespeare in his early poems; he was brought up at Wilton, the seat of the Pembrokes, and in 1601 he inscribed his 'Defence of Ryme' to William Herbert; the Pembroke family favoured astrologers, and the ghost that gulled Daniel may have been the same that gulled Allen, Sandford, and Dr Dee, and through them gulled Herbert. Here is at least a clever guess, and Boaden is again the guesser. But Professor Minto makes a guess even more fortunate. No Elizabethan poet wrote ampler verse, none scorned 'ignorance' more, or more haughtily asserted his learning than Chapman. In 'The Tears of Peace' (1609), Homer as a spirit visits and inspires him; the claim to such inspiration may have been often made by the translator of Homer in earlier years. Chapman was pre-eminently the poet of 'Night.' 'The Shadow of Night,' with the motto *Versus mei habebunt aliquantum Noctis*, appeared in 1594: the title-page describes it as containing 'two poetical Hymnes.' In the dedication Chapman assails unlearned 'passion-driven men,' 'hide-bound with affection to great men's fancies,' and ridicules the alleged eternity of their 'idolatrous plots for riches.' 'Now what a supererogation in wit this is to think Skill so mightily pierced with their loves that she should prostitutely show them her secrets, when she will scarcely be looked upon by others, but with invocation, fasting, watching; yea, not without having drops of their souls, like a heavenly familiar.' Of Chapman's Homer a part appeared in 1596; dedicatory Sonnets in a later edition are addressed to both Southampton and Pembroke."²

¹ Palgrave's Songs and Sonnets by William Shakespeare.

² The Sonnets of William Shakespeare, edited by Edward Dowden.

Dowden, like Palgrave, confesses that "it is entirely unknown to what contemporary poet Shakespeare alludes." Nor is the ignorance thus ingenuously confessed much enlightened by the remark of Mr Furnivall, who, after quoting some statements from the writings of Chapman, says,—“These make a better case for Chapman being the rival than has been made for any one else.”¹

With respect to what is said by these and by all other commentators and critics, we may be permitted to suggest a few questions such as the following: Was the poet referred to, the rival of Shakespeare in the strict and proper sense of the word “rival”? Is not the idea of rivalry on the part of the other poet, and of jealousy on Shakespeare's part, put into the Sonnets rather than fairly extracted from them? Does Shakespeare speak of the other poet as if he were his rival or his contemporary? Does not the language used by Shakespeare imply that, instead of being a rival or a contemporary poet, that other was one who had before Shakespeare's time passed into the spirit-world? Was he not a “spirit, by spirits taught to write above a mortal pitch”? Does not the emphatic reiteration of his being “a spirit” indicate that he was not a living contemporary of Shakespeare? If the language of Shakespeare in these Sonnets is distinguished by the utmost precision, propriety, and exactness, what does he mean by describing the other poet as “that able spirit,” “a better spirit,” “his spirit, by spirits taught”? Why this reiteration, unless to guard against the idea of the other poet being supposed to be a rival or contemporary of Shakespeare? Why

all this but to give, in epithetic and emphatic terms, the most exact and vivid description of the poet to whom allusion is made? Is it not the fact that the search for the supposed “patron”—the mysterious and great unknown, Mr W. H. of T. T.'s inscription—has, like the “Ducdame” cry in “As You Like It,” gathered the critics together in a circle? And has not this “Greek invocation” of T. T., by misleading the critics in the search for the “great unknown,” led them astray in their search for the poet whose personal character and poetic excellence are so highly commended and extolled by Shakespeare? Is not this fact the explanation of Dowden's statement—“Yet in the end we are forced to confess that the poet remains as dim a figure as the patron”?

“Here,” says Dowden, “are allusions which ought to lead to identification.” And, “these hints,” says Palgrave, “should supply a clue.” If, by the use of this clue put into our hand by Shakespeare, the other poet referred to can be discovered and identified, many questions relating to the interpretation of the Sonnets, their theme, purpose, and meaning, will be answered, and much of the mystery thrown around them will be cleared away.

In entering into this inquiry, and in prosecuting this search, we are not forgetful of Shelley's words:

“If any should be curious to discover,
Whether to you I am a friend or lover,
Let them read Shakespeare's Sonnets,
taking thence
A whetstone for their dull intelligence.”

Nor do we forget what is said by Cebes, the Theban, that the interpretation of his famous tablet is

¹ Introduction to Furnivall's Shakespeare.

like the interpretation of the Sphinx's riddle, the penalty of failure being that the unhappy man should be destroyed by that mysterious and merciless monster. Shakespeare's Sonnets have been the enigma, or "book of riddles,"¹ in modern literature. And there can be little doubt that were the penalty annexed to failure in the attempt to interpret

them the same as that annexed to the misreading of the Sphinx's riddle, the number of those making the attempt would be very considerably reduced. "But," in Shakespeare's words, "to the purpose, and so to the venture."²

With a view to the identification of the poet referred to by Shakespeare, let the four following sonnets be considered :—

LXXIX.

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace ;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen ;
Yet what of thee thy Poet doth invent,
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word
From thy behaviour ; beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy cheek : he can afford
No praise to thee, but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee, thou thyself dost pay.

LXXX.

O how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame !
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride ;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly pride :
Then if he thrive, and I be cast away,
The worst was this,—my love was my decay.

LXXXV.

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compil'd,
Reserve their character, with golden quill
And precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd.
I think good thoughts, while others write good words,
And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry 'Amen'
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well-refined pen.

¹ Merry Wives of Windsor, i. 1. 209.² Henry IV., Part II., Epilogue.

Hearing you prais'd, I say, 'Tis so, 'tis true,
 And to the most of praise add something more;
 But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
 Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
 Then others for their breath of words respect,
 Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

LXXXVI.

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
 Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,
 That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
 Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
 Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
 Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
 No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
 Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
 He, nor that affable familiar ghost
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
 As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
 I was not sick of any fear from thence:
 But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
 Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

By conjectural criticism the names of Spenser, Marlowe, Daniel, Drayton, Chapman; and others have been suggested, as answering to the description here given by Shakespeare of the poet to whom reference is made. It could be easily shown that what has been said in support of the position, that any one of these is the poet referred to, depends on nothing more than mere conjecture on the part of the critics. But our purpose is not to refute or to contradict, but to expound and to establish. And our exposition and argument proceed according to the Baconian method applied to the solution of a literary problem. And as the result of the application of this method of inquiry and interpretation to the Sonnets of Shakespeare, it can be shown, from the date of their composition and publication; from the names and designations given to them; from their phraseology, and the kind of poetry to which they belong; from their consistent unity and the principle according to which they are connected and distributed; and from the poetic idea,

invention, or device to which they all give expression, and on which they all depend,—that “Shakespeare’s Sonnets,” and “A Lover’s Complaint by William Shakespeare,” published in 1609 by T. T. (Thomas Thorpe), convey, and were by the poet designed to convey, a meaning very different from that put into them and extorted from them by the conjectural criticism. They can be proved to be Shakespeare’s “Confessions and Meditations,” as truly as “The Confessions” of Augustine are the record of the spiritual experience of that great divine; or as truly as the “Vita Nuova” and the “Divina Commedia” of Dante are the permanent expression in poetic form of chapters in the life of the great Italian poet.

Into the proof of these positions it is not our purpose on this occasion to enter. But if we establish the identity of the other poet to whom Shakespeare refers, and whose writings are described in the four sonnets which have been extracted from the group, beginning with the 79th and ending with the 86th, we shall,

by so doing, prepare the way for the argument (founded on the date, names, phraseology, unity, poetic kind, and poetic device of these sonnets) that proves them to be the psalm of Shakespeare's "New Life," as really as John Bunyan's remarkable work or prose poem, entitled "Grace Abounding," is the story of Bunyan's life written by himself.

A careful examination of the words of Shakespeare respecting the other poet and his writings, yields the following results: I. The writings to which allusion is made were not easily accessible in Shakespeare's time. II. The poet referred to was not a contemporary of Shakespeare; and he himself had been taught by those who were not his contemporaries. III. While those who taught him were not his contemporaries, they were nevertheless "his compeers by night giving him aid." IV. The other poet is described as much indebted, not only to "his compeers by night," but also to another—

"That affable familiar ghost,
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence."

V. The theme or main purpose of that other poet was the same as that of Shakespeare in the Sonnets. VI. The "verse" or poetry of that other was distinguished by its stateliness, strength, and grandeur. VII. It was also distinguished by its singularly exquisite polish and refinement. VIII. That other poet had expended his utmost skill in the composition of the hymns and comments of praise referred to by Shakespeare. IX. It was not till some time after Shakespeare had begun to write the "songs and praises," the "meditations and confessions" of which his Sonnets consist, that he became acquainted with the writings of that other poet, and the effect upon him was

so depressing and discouraging, that for a time he gave up the attempt to write anything which he could deem worthy of his great theme.

If these statements give a fair analysis and representation of what is said respecting the other poet in the Sonnets under consideration, then in all poetic literature there is only one poet whose personality and writings answer to the description given by Shakespeare of that other and of his writings. The great Florentine patriot and Italian poet, DANTE ALIGHIERI, is the other poet referred to, and so highly commended by Shakespeare.

In proving that Dante is that other poet, let each statement of Shakespeare be set over against what is known of Dante and of his writings. This comparison of feature with feature, or of the characteristics of Dante, as given by Shakespeare, with the known features and self-revealed characteristics of Dante, constitutes our argument for the identification of the other poet.

I. The writings of the poet referred to were not easily or generally accessible in Shakespeare's time. In Sonnet lxxxv. we read—

"My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds
her still,
While comments of your praise, richly
compil'd,
Reserve their character, with golden quill
And precious phrase by all the Muses
filed."

The word "character" here used denotes the written or printed form of the compositions to which reference is made. The meaning of the word in this place is the same as in the 59th sonnet—

"O that record could with a backward
look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique
book,
Since mind at first in *character* was
done!"

The "comments of praise" referred to are said to "reserve their character"—that is, to keep themselves back from being generally accessible by the written form or language in which they are expressed. The meaning conveyed by the peculiar form of expression here used by Shakespeare is, that the compositions of that other poet were in a "character"—that is, in a form of writing or language not generally understood, because not translated or rendered into English at the time when Shakespeare wrote his Sonnets.

This might be said of many other writings than those of Dante. True; but what is here said of the written form or "character" of the writings as untranslated, or not generally accessible, taken in connection with the description given of the writer and of his theme and style, is true of no other than of Dante and his writings. In Shakespeare's time none of the works of Dante were rendered into English. They reserved their character in the language in which, "with golden quill and precious phrase by all the Muses filed," they were originally composed; or if some of them had been translated into other languages, they were not known or accessible in English. There is abundant proof that Dante's writings were known to Chaucer, and that they were the source from which he derived many of his poetical ideas and figures. Sir Philip Sidney and Spenser had thoroughly studied them; but they were not translated into English till Boyd, in 1785, published his translation of the "*Inferno*," and followed this in 1802 by the translation of the whole of the "*Divina Commedia*." Not till very recently

(if even yet) could it be said of Dante's writings that they were easily accessible to English readers. But whether translated or untranslated, the "*Vita Nuova*," the "*Divina Commedia*," the "*De Monarchia*," the "*Convito*," and other writings of the great Florentine poet and philosopher, "reserve their character." For of those who read them, there are but few who understand them.

The words "reserve their character" have greatly perplexed the critics and interpreters of the Sonnets. Dr Schmidt says the reading here is "probably corrupt."¹ Malone says "reserve" has here the sense of "preserve"; and, in illustration of this meaning of the word, he refers to the 16th sonnet, where we find what is equivalent to "preserve," but nothing answering to "reserve":—

"To give away yourself, keeps yourself still."

Dr Dowden, after giving the words of Malone,² and a reference to sonnet xxxii. 7, says: "But what does 'preserve their character' mean? An anonymous emender suggests 'rehearse thy' or 'rehearse your.' Possibly '*deserve* their character' may be right—i.e., '*deserve* to be written,'"³ If the word "reserve" is so flexible as to signify, as here used, "*deserve*," "*rehearse*," or "*preserve*," we should be compelled to conclude, with Dr Schmidt, that the reading is "probably corrupt." But happily, our conclusion is not against the word, but against the conjectural interpretation given of it by the critics. No other word in the English language could so exactly and precisely express the meaning intended here as the word "*reserve*." The nearest equivalent

¹ Shakespeare Lexicon.

² The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, vol. xvi.

³ The Sonnets of William Shakespeare, edited by Edward Dowden.

would be "conceal," or "hide from view as under a veil." But the word "conceal" would here be a very inadequate substitute for the word "reserve" used by Shakespeare. For the "reservedness" is in the "character" of the "comments of praise," to which reference is made. They, by the "character" in which they are compiled, conceal or hide themselves, as under a veil, from the view of the great majority of observers. The idea of this kind of "reserve" in the "character" of a literary composition, may have been suggested to Shakespeare by his reading of a little treatise by Sir Geoffraie Fenton, entitled, 'Monophylo, a Philosophical Discourse and Division of Love.' In the first sentence of the dedication of this most interesting little work to "The right virtuous lady, the Lady Hobby," Geoffraie Fenton says,—"*Since my last translation to your good Ladyshippe, I have disposed some part of my leasure to reveale Monophylo.*" This dedication is dated, "At London, the sixt of Aprill, 1572." This book must have been very carefully studied by Shakespeare. It is a translation or revealing of what, so long as it was untranslated, *reserved* itself as under a veil. But a nearer approach to the idea figured in the words of Shakespeare than in Fenton's dedication is found in the second of two sonnets inscribed by R. N. "to his friend, M. Joshua Sylvester," and prefixed to Sylvester's translation of 'The Divine Weeks and Works' of Du Bartas. The first part of Sylvester's work was published in 1598:—

"Had golden Homer and great Maro kept
In envious silence their admired measures,
A thousand worthies' worthy deeds had
slept,
They reft of praise, and we of learned
pleasures.
But oh! what rich incomparable treasures
Had the world wanted, had this modern
glory,
Divine Du Bartas *hid his heavenly cœsures*,
Singing the mighty world's immortal
story?
O then how deeply is our isle beholding
To Chapman, and to Phaer! but, yet
much more
To thee (dear Sylvester) *for thus unfolding*
These holy wonders, *hid from us before*.
Those works profound, are yet profane;
but thine,
Grave, learned, deep, delightful, and
divine."

If we apply the idea of R. N. in this sonnet respecting Homer and Virgil as "keeping envious silence" till they were translated by Chapman and Phaer, to the writings of Dante or the "comments of praise" referred to by Shakespeare, we get the exact meaning of the words "reserve their character"; and we obtain this by no effort of conjecture, but by a patient study of Shakespeare's words, according to the methods and principles of inductive and legitimate criticism.¹

What has been said respecting the reserved character of Dante's writings is not in any way affected by the fact that a Latin prose translation of the "Commedia" was completed in 1417 by Giovanni da Serravalle; nor by the fact that in 1596 Grangier published the first French translation of Dante's great poem. Whether Shakespeare be-

¹ The reader may with advantage note the use of the words "reserve" and "reveal" in 1 Peter i. 4, 5. In the Geneva version the words "ready to be revealed" are rendered by "which is prepared to be showed." Of "reserve" on the one part as implying ignorance on the other, Raleigh (Sir Walter) says,—"*Men's blessed or sorrowful estates after death, God hath reserved; man's knowledge lying but in his hope.*"—Preface to 'The History of the World.'

came acquainted with Dante's writings through the Latin or the French translation, or whether he knew and studied them in their original and proper language—the Italian tongue—his description of them at the time when he wrote the Sonnets is literally true, when he says of them that they “reserve their character.”

II. The poet referred to was not a contemporary of Shakespeare; and he himself had been taught by those who were not his contemporaries. This twofold position is founded on the words of Shakespeare in the 86th sonnet.

“Was it *his spirit, by spirits taught to write*
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?”

The phraseology here used is peculiar; but, as we shall see, it is most significant and appropriate. It is true of Dante and of no other. He was that “spirit by spirits taught to write above a mortal pitch.”

In the first canto of the “Inferno,” Dante thus describes his meeting with Virgil:—

“While to the lower space with backward step
I fell, my ken discerned the form of one
Whose voice seemed faint, through long disuse of speech;
When him in that great desert I espied,
‘Have mercy on me!’ cried I out aloud,
‘Spirit or living man! whate’er thou be!’
He answered: ‘Now not man; man once I was,
And born of Lombard parents, Mantuans both
By country, when the power of Julius yet
Was scarcely firm. At Rome my life was passed
Beneath the mild Augustus, in the time
Of fabled deities and false. A bard
Was I, and made Anchises’ upright son
The subject of my muse.’”

To Virgil, Dante thus replies:—
“And art thou then that Virgil, that well-spring
From which such copious floods of eloquence
Have issued?
Glory and light of all the tuneful train!
May it avail me, that I long with zeal
Have sought thy volume, and with love immense
Have coned it over; MY MASTER
THOU AND GUIDE!
Thou he from whom alone I have derived
That style which for its beauty unto fame
Exalts me.”¹

Statius, another of the spirits by whom Dante was taught, appears in the twenty-first canto of the “Purgatorio,” and moves along with Virgil and Dante in their upward way—

“To us
A shade appeared, and after us approached,
Contemplating the crowd beneath its feet.
We were not ‘ware of it; so first it spake,
Saying, ‘God give you peace, my brethren!’
‘. . . If that *ye be spirits* to whom God
Vouchsafes not room above, who, up the height
Thus far has been your guide?”²
Virgil and Statius conversing together, move onwards; and Dante, following them, is instructed by their discourse.
“They on before me went, I sole pursued
Listening their speech, *that to my thoughts conveyed*
Mysterious lessons of sweet poesy.”³

The preceding quotations from the “Inferno” and the “Purgatorio” are of themselves sufficient to begot the probable belief that Dante is the poet whom Shakespeare describes as a “spirit, by spirits taught to write above a mortal

¹ Inferno, 57-84—Carey's Translation.

² Purgatorio, xxi. 7-21.

³ Ibid., xxii. 125-128.

pitch;" but this probability is changed into certainty—in so far as certainty is attainable in a case of literary evidence—by what follows.

III. The "spirits" who taught the other poet referred to, were not the contemporaries of that poet, and yet they were "his compeers by night giving him aid."

In the 86th sonnet, Shakespeare thus writes—

"Neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished."

"Compeers" are those of the same rank, class, order, or profession. "By night" is a figurative expression for a time, condition, or state of darkness. To give aid to another "by night," is to give him help in the absence of what is signified by light or day. The "spirits" here said to have given the other poet help were themselves in the midst of darkness or night.

Dante's great poetic "master and guide" was Virgil. Next to Virgil, Dante's guide was Statius. The one, Virgil, is commonly regarded by commentators as used by Dante to denote reason exercising itself in its own light or in the absence of the light of divine revelation; the other, Statius, to denote reason directed and guided by divine revelation. If Dante's "compeers by night giving him aid" denote the poets with whom, apart from the aid and light of divine revelation, he was associated, from whom he received aid, and among whom, as of their poetic rank or order, he was reckoned, then Statius must be excluded from this number or company. Not in the "Purgatorio," but amongst the darkness, "by night," of the "Inferno," are we to find the poetic compeers of Dante here referred to. In order

that the accuracy, precision, and exact appropriateness of Shakespeare's description of Dante and his compeers by night may appear the more vividly, we shall give Dr John Carlyle's prose rendering of the place, in the fourth canto of the "Inferno," where Dante is formally associated with those called "his compeers by night"; or where Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan associate Dante with themselves as a compeer, "making him to be of their number, so that he was a sixth among such intelligences." Every word, phrase, or epithet of Shakespeare finds what answers to it in the following sentences:—

"Our way was not yet far within the topmost part of it (the wood or dense crowd of spirits in the dark outer parts of Limbo), when I saw a fire which conquered a hemisphere of the darkness. We were still a little distant from it, yet not so distant that I did not in part discern what honourable people occupied that place.

"O thou that honourest every science and art, who are these who have such honour that it separates them from the manner of the rest?"

"And he to me: 'The honoured name which sounds of them, up in that life of thine, gains favour in heaven, which thus advances them.'

"Meanwhile a voice was heard by me: 'Honour the great poet! His shade returns that was departed.'

"After the voice had passed, and was silent, I saw four great shadows come to us. They had an aspect neither sad nor joyful. The good Master began to speak: 'Mark him with that sword in hand, who comes before the three as their lord. That is Homer, the sovereign poet. The next who comes is Horace, the satirist. Ovid is the third; and the last is Lucan. Because each agrees with me in the name which the one voice sounded (that of poet uttered by the united voices of the four when they saw Virgil return), they do me honour; and therein they do well.'

"Thus I saw assembled the goodly

school of that lord of highest song, who, like an eagle, soars above the rest. After they had talked a space together, they turned to me with signs of salutation; and my Master smiled thereat. And greatly more besides they honoured me; for *they made me of their number, so that I was a sixth amid such intelligences. Thus we went onwards to the light.*"¹

As the impression answers to the seal, or as face answers to face in a mirror, so does the thing described in Dante answer to the description given of it by Shakespeare.

IV. The poet referred to by Shakespeare is said to have received aid not only from "his compeers by night," but also from one described as "that affable familiar ghost."

In the 86th sonnet Shakespeare says—

"He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors, of my silence cannot boast."

"A familiar ghost" is a spirit in attendance on any one, doing him kindly service. "Love," says Armado, "is a familiar."² But love is not the "familiar ghost" here so happily described by Shakespeare. If by chance, by mere coincidence, or by the free play of his poetic imagination, Shakespeare gave a most accurate and vivid description of Dante and "his compeers by night," is it by mere chance or felicitous coincidence that he gives the most beautiful and true, the most lifelike picture of Beatrice in relation to Dante, when he describes her as that affable familiar ghost that nightly or in dreams gulled Dante with intelligence? Boethius in his fourth book represents Philosophy as calling Lucan her familiar (*familiaris noster Lucanus*) because of the

philosophic thought pervading his "Pharsalia." In Dante's early life Beatrice (why so called few understand—"Vita Nuova") had won the heart of Dante. And the story of that first love, in its commencement, decline, and revival, is told in the "Vita Nuova"—a little book, to many as mysterious or meaningless as the Sonnets of Shakespeare. Beatrice, or what is signified by that mystic word, "the glorious lady of his mind" ("Vita Nuova") prompted and controlled all Dante's movements in his "New Life." By the impulse of her love he wrote the "Vita Nuova," and by the same impulse and in honour of Beatrice he composed the "Divina Commedia." It was Beatrice much more than Virgil and Statius, who, having gone down to the Inferno for Dante's sake, led him through the Inferno and through Purgatory and lifted him up to Paradise. It is Beatrice that instructs, chides, directs, stimulates, restrains, guides, and cheers Dante. She is to him what Philosophy was to Boethius—his light, consolation, and joy. To Dante Beatrice was what the monitor spirit was to Socrates. Without Beatrice Dante is not himself, he can do nothing. "Where is Beatrice?" is the question that is always asked by him when he is in any perplexity or distress. She was indeed to Dante "that affable familiar ghost." And yet her affability was ever with "a due reservedness"; it was with the authority of a mother or "mistress" having unquestioned right to command, chide, or caress according to her pleasure. To her, in this view, might the words of Shakespeare in Sonnet cxxxi., to the "mistress of his passion," be addressed—

¹ Inferno, iv. 67-103.

² Love's Labour's Lost, i. 2. 177.

"Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make
them cruel;
For well thou know'st, to my dear
doting heart
Thou art the fairest and most precious
jewel."

The affability and familiarity of Beatrice must not be misunderstood. Beatrice had been slighted and neglected by Dante for some years after he had attained to manhood. Accordingly, when receiving him again into favour (for she is not relentless or implacable), she reminds him of his folly, and rebukes him for his sin. Before giving him fresh tokens of her love, she thus addresses him:—

"Observe me well. I am, in sooth,
I am
Beatrice. What! And hast thou deigned
at last,
Approach the mountain? Knewest not,
O man!
Thy happiness is here?'—Down fell
mine eyes
On the clear fount, but there myself
espying,
Recoiled, and sought the greensward;
such a weight
Of shame was on my forehead. With
a mien
Of that stern majesty that doth surround
A mother's presence to her awe-struck
child,
She looked; a flavour of such bitterness
Was mingled in her pity."¹

The description of Beatrice as an affable familiar ghost nightly gulling the poet referred to by Shakespeare, appears to be founded on what Beatrice says of her relations to Dante in the following words spoken for the use of Dante, though addressed to the "pious" forms—the bright and pitying semblances beyond the stream:—

"Standing motionless on the aforesaid side of the car, she (thus) addressed those pious beings: 'Ye watch in the eternal day, so that neither night nor sleep robs you of a

single step that time makes in its progress. Wherefore, my answer is rather intended to be heard by him who is weeping there, so that his fault and his sorrow (repentance) may be of equal measure. Not only through the working of the mighty orbs that guide each seed to its predestined end, according to the meeting of the constellations in attendance on it, but through the bountiful endowment (*larghezza*) of divine graces descending in showers from a height so great as to far exceed our vision, this man, in his "New Life," was virtually such that in him every righteous habit should have produced wonderful effects. But the more naturally capable and fertile is the soil, the more evil and the wilder does it become through bad seed and lack of cultivation. For some time I upheld him with my looks: showing him my youthful eyes, I led him by their light with me in the path of rectitude. As soon as I had reached the threshold of my second age, and had changed my life (from mortal to immortal), he left me, and gave himself away to others. When from flesh to spirit I had risen, and beauty and virtue had increased in me, I was to him less dear, and less pleasing; and he turned his steps into ways not true, following false images of good, which never fulfil their promise. *Nor did it avail me to obtain for him inspiration, with which in dreams and otherwise, I called him back; so little did he heed it. So low he fell, that all arguments for his salvation were ineffectual, but that he should be shown the children of perdition. For this cause I visited the entrance (*l'uscio*) of the dead, and to him (Virgil) who has conducted him hither with weeping, I presented my prayers. The high decree of God would have been broken if Lethe had been passed, and such food (the consciousness of sin forgiven) tasted without paying the scot of some penitential tears.'*"²

Beatrice is thus seen to be the "affable familiar ghost" spoken of by Shakespeare; and Dante, the compeer of Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, is thus

¹ Purgatorio, xxx. 72-82.² Ibid., xxx. 100-145. See Dugdale's Translation.

seen to be the poet referred to by Shakespeare. All the visions and dreams of Dante were nothing more than the "intelligence" with which Beatrice inspired or "gulled him." And for all his poetic art, as he himself confessed, he was indebted to Virgil and the other poets, who disdained not to account him one of their number, rank, and profession—a poetic peer among poetic princes.

Who then was Beatrice? To the school of the prosaic interpreters of poetic symbols, figures, and ideas, Dante's Beatrice was the daughter of Folco Portinari of Florence. As well might the same interpreters say that Philosophy, who appeared in the figure of a woman to Boethius, was a form compounded of flesh and blood. To Boethius Philosophy was the mistress of his life and the mistress of all virtue. To her Boethius speaks, and to him Philosophy speaks, much in the same manner as Dante addresses Beatrice, and as she addresses Dante. And of Philosophy Boethius says not a little which bears a strong resemblance to what Dante says of Beatrice. It is not improbable, that for the idea of wisdom or philosophy, personified by Dante in the poetic figure of Beatrice, he was indebted to the descriptive personification of philosophy given by Boethius in the opening chapter of his most instructive and fascinating work '*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*.' In saying this we do not ignore Dante's indebtedness to the canonical book of the Proverbs, and to the apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon. From both of these books Dante directly derived many of his ideas. But it would seem that, in the first instance, the medium through which he drew the idea of wisdom or philosophy as a lady or woman

of transcendent grace and beauty—most affable and familiar, and at the same time most reserved and majestic—was the book of Boethius. To Boethius Philosophy appeared to be

"A woman of a most reverend countenance, with eyes of superhuman radiance and searching power; of a lifelike and vivid colour; and of unimpaired vigour and force, although so advanced in years that she could not be thought to be of the time of Boethius. In stature she seemed sometimes to be of the common ordinary height of human beings, while at other times she not only touched the clouds with her head, but with it pierced the very heavens, so that she could not be followed by the eyes of those who looked after her. Her raiment, woven by her own hands out of the finest threads, was most skilfully made of the most subtle texture, and with the most durable material."

At first, when she visited Boethius in his sickness, she carried books in her right hand, and in her left a sceptre; and with an air of majesty and words of rebuke, commanding away the sirens that stood by the sick man's bed, she said :—

"These are they who, with the fruitless thorns of the passions, choke and destroy the hopeful crops of productive reason, and only accustom the minds of men to disease, but never free them from it. If (indeed continued she, directing her words to the Siren Muses) your blandishments and caresses had seduced, according to what commonly happens in your case, some profane wretch, I should have the less keenly felt the injury, since in that case the effects of my labours should not have been marred; but this man whom you have debauched was nourished in eleatic and academic studies. Begone, therefore, ye sirens, whose pleasures sweetly destroy, and leave this man to be cared for and healed by my muses!"

Having thus made room for herself, this lady of imperious aspect

and authority approached near to the sick man, and having seated herself at the foot of his bed, she sang a mournful hymn, in which she bewailed her patient's troubled state of mind :—

"Once, nature was his mighty book,
But now how altered is his mind!
How grossly stupid now, and blind!
His neck a weighty chain doth bear;
No cheerful smiles his face doth wear;
Nor lifts he up his head to breathe the
air."¹

Having sung this song—

"She looked intently on me," says Boethius, "and said, 'Art thou he who but lately, *nourished with my milk* and brought up with my food, didst arrive at the strength of a manly and vigorous soul? I *certainly gave thee such armour as*, if thou hadst not cast it away, would have made thee invincible. Dost thou not know me? Why this silence? Is it from shame or from stupidity? I wish it were from shame; but, as I perceive, stupidity oppresses thee.' When, however, she saw me not only silent, but almost speechless and dumb, touching my breast gently with her hand, she said, 'There is no danger; he suffers under a lethargy—the common disease of minds like his, deceived and distracted. He has for a time forgotten himself; he will rally easily as soon as he recognises who it is that is beside him; and to help him in this, I will wipe his eyes, which are darkened with the cloud of things mortal.' Having thus spoken, she contracted a part of her garment (the robe of philosophy) into a fold, and with it she dried my tears. The clouds of sadness being thus dispersed, I began to breathe more freely; and set myself to recollect the features of her who had done so much towards healing me. Accordingly, when I had earnestly fixed my eyes on her, I soon recognised her as *Philosophy, my tender nurse*, in whose discipline I was instructed, and at whose feet I was brought up from my youth. 'And

why then,' said I, 'O thou mistress (*magistra*) of all the virtues, dost thou descend from above into these solitary places of my *banishment*? Is it that you also may with me be held guilty under false accusations?' 'Shall I then,' replied she, 'O my loved pupil (*alumne*), forsake thee, and refuse to bear a part of that burden under which I know that thou art now labouring for my sake? It is contrary to the first principles of philosophy to leave the innocent without a companion in his pilgrimage. Shall I fear an accusation, and be greatly moved as if some new horror had occurred? Is this the first time, dost thou think, that Philosophy (*Sapientia*) hath been accused and threatened with danger by men of immoral and impious life? Among the ancients, and even before the time of our dear Plato, did I not often wage a mighty war against the reckless audacity of Folly? And even while Plato lived, did not his master, Socrates, aided and cheered by me, triumph over the death to which he was unjustly adjudged? . . . Therefore wonder not if we be agitated with storms and tempests whilst we sail on the sea of this life, for we propose to ourselves no greater thing than that we should be offensive to base and malignant men.'"²

If to Boethius Dante was indebted for the idea of wisdom or philosophy personified by him under the name of Beatrice, and for not a few other ideas developed by him in his great poem, there can be little doubt that Shakespeare, besides receiving through Dante some very important suggestions from Boethius, made the book of that banished and shamefully abused man the subject of his deep meditation. From it, in the time of his own great sorrow, he sucked "adversity's sweet milk, philosophy."³ And so intimately acquainted was he with the contents of that book, that Friar

¹ Boethius: made English by the Right Honourable Richard Lord Viscount Preston. 1696.

² Boethius, book i. 1, 2.

³ Romeo and Juliet, iii. 3.

Laurence and Romeo are made by him to give a summary of the argument of one part of it, in their conversation reported in the third scene of the third act of *Romeo and Juliet*.

"*Rom.* Romeo may not—he
is banished.

. . . I am banished.

And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?

Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,

No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,

But—'banished'—to kill me, 'banished'?

O friar, the damned use that word in hell;

Howlings attend it: How hast thou the heart,

Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
To mangle me with that word—'banishment'?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word,

Adversity's sweet milk, *philosophy*,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet 'banished?' Hang up philosophy!

Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,

It helps not, it prevails not; talk no more.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears."

With the ideas and words of *Romeo* and *Friar Laurence* in this place, let what is said by *Boethius* in the first five chapters of the first book of his '*Consolation of Philosophy*' be carefully compared. The comparison, whatever be the conclusion to which it leads, will of itself be an interesting and suggestive exercise, and it may tend, with some other things here stated, to give a new direction to the inquiries and studies of

some of those who are engaged in prosecuting investigations into facts and questions relating to *Shakespeare* and his writings.

V. The main theme or purpose of the other poet was the same as that of *Shakespeare* in the *Sonnets*.

In the 80th sonnet *Shakespeare* says:—

"O how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your
name,

And in the praise thereof spends all his
might,

To make me tongue-tied, speaking of
your fame!"

In the 85th sonnet he says:—

"My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds
her still,

While comments of your praise, richly
compil'd,

Reserve their character, with golden
quill

And precious phrase by all the Muses
filed.

I think good thoughts, while others
write good words,

And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry
'Amen'

To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well-refined pen."

Again, in the 86th sonnet, *Shakespeare* thus writes:—

"Was it the proud full sail of his great
verse,

Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain

inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein

they grew?"

The identity of theme and purpose of the other poet and of *Shakespeare* is by these statements established beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt. This identity is unquestionable. It is admitted and acknowledged by those who suppose that *Shakespeare's* theme was the glory of *Lord Herbert* or *Lord Southampton*, or the sublime excellence of some unknown lord or lady of tender age and

of miscellaneous accomplishments. This identity is confessed even by those who suppose that the lady in black who figures in the concluding series of the Sonnets was literally and prosaically the beautiful and fascinating, but the faithless and gross mistress of Shakespeare and of Shakespeare's friend. But while perhaps all the critics, irrespectively of their conjectures in relation to the nature, purpose, and destination of the Sonnets, admit that the other poet's theme or purpose was the same as Shakespeare's, none of them seem to have dreamed that Dante was the other poet referred to by Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare's purpose or theme was the same as Dante's.

Without applying to the criticism to which Shakespeare's Sonnets have been subjected the poet's words in Sonnet clii.—

"All my vows are oaths but to misuse thee;

And all my honest faith in thee is lost,"

—let us mark carefully the terms in which Shakespeare describes the theme or purpose of the other poet. For by doing this we shall learn not a little respecting the nature, theme, and purpose of all the Sonnets.

Shakespeare calls the writings of the other poet "comments of praise" (lxxxv.) They are intended for the praise of him whose "praises" are sung by Shakespeare in all the Sonnets—"comments of your praise." Who, then, is this exalted and glorious one, whose transcendent excellence is the theme of both these poets? He is the one of whom Shakespeare says in the 83d sonnet—

"There lives more life in one of your fair eyes

Than both your poets can in praise devise."

He is the one who cannot be loved to excess, or in relation to whom love can never degenerate into idolatry.

"Let not my love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such and ever so."
—Sonnet cv.

To this one—ever the same—
"all" Shakespeare's "songs and praises" are directed, according to his expostulation addressed to his Muse in the 100th sonnet.

"Where art thou, Muse, that thou forgett'st so long

To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?

Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,

Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?

Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem

In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem

And gives thy pen both skill and argument."

To this one, Shakespeare's Sonnets are all addressed. For they are "all" "to one," and "of one": and that "one" is ever the same—"still such and ever so."

"Still constant in a wondrous excellence;

Therefore my verse, to constancy confined,

One thing expressing, leaves out difference."

—Sonnet cv.

Again, Shakespeare calls the writings of the other poet not only "comments of praise," but also "hymns," composed and sung in honour of the "one" to whom, and of whom, he sings in all the Sonnets. What, then, does Shakespeare mean by the word "hymn," used in the 85th sonnet? This word is interpreted by himself in the second line of the same sonnet. Hymns are there called "comments of praise." And the phraseology and figures used in connection with the word "hymn" seem

intended to indicate that the word itself here, as in all places in which it occurs in Shakespeare's writings, denotes "a solemn religious song,"—that is, a song distinguished not only from "worthless songs" (c.), but also from songs other than those of a sacred or religious kind.

"I think good thoughts, while others
- write good words,
*And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry
'Amen'*

*To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well-refined pen.
Hearing you prais'd, I say, 'Tis so, 'tis
true,'*

*And to the most of praise add something
more;*

But that is in my thought, whose love
to you,

Though words come hindmost, holds
his rank before."

The writings of the other poet referred to are comments of praise: they are "hymns," or solemn religious songs, dedicated to the same theme as that to which the Sonnets are consecrated by Shakespeare.

From this description of the writings of that other poet, we learn from Shakespeare himself that his Sonnets are "hymns"—"comments of praise"—solemn and religious songs in honour of the "one" who is ever the same. Apart altogether from the identification of Dante as the other poet or hymn-writer, the light reflected from Shakespeare's description of the writings of that poet serves to guide us to the true nature, purpose, and design of Shakespeare's Sonnets. For in accordance with what is said of the comments of praise and hymns of the other poet, is the description given by him of his own Sonnets. In the 102d sonnet, he compares the "lays" or sonnets of an earlier time in his new love and life to

the "mournful hymns" of Philomel in early summer; and in the 29th sonnet, which sounds like "a cry from the depths," he thus rises out of dejection and sorrow into hope and triumph:—

"Yet in these thoughts myself almost
despising,

Haply I think on thee, and then my
state,

Like to the lark, at break of day arising

From sullen earth, sings hymns at
heaven's gate;

For thy sweet love remember'd such
wealth brings,

That then I scorn to change my state
with kings."

What is that sonnet itself but a hymn rising out of darkness and sorrow, and entering into light and joy? It reads and sounds like a poetic paraphrase of the words of Augustine:—

"These mortifying reflections would of necessity sink me into despair, if Thou didst not interpose, according to Thy wonted goodness, and, in the midst of my lamentations and deep distress, support my drooping soul and assuage my anguish with the prospect of mercy when I stand most in need of it. Thou dost lift up my sorrowful wailings and my deep sighs by transporting my sad soul above the lofty hill-tops to the sunny heights, where Thou dost set before me a table richly furnished for the refreshment of the weary and the joy of the disconsolate. Thus revived and filled with delight, I forget my many miseries; and, lifted above the heights of the earth, I find true rest and peace."¹

A quotation from Augustine may, to some readers and critics, appear as foreign to the sentiments expressed in Shakespeare's Sonnets as the identification of Dante as the other hymn-writer and poet referred to will appear strange and incredible. But there are more things in Shakespeare's Sonnets than have been dreamt of in the

¹ Augustine's Manual, ix.

philosophy of conjectural and prosaic critics.

Shakespeare describes the purpose of the other poet as twofold,—namely, (1) to set forth the praises of the one to whom, in the Sonnets, Shakespeare's muse is dedicated—

"A better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his
might;"

and (2) to gain for himself possession of the one whose praises he sings—

"Bound for the prize of all-too-precious
you."

This also was Shakespeare's purpose; for while it may be said that both Dante and Shakespeare intended that their writings should serve a manifold purpose, or be subservient to many great ends, yet the main purpose of both these poets was to celebrate the praises of what Sir Philip Sidney, in his 'Defence of Poesy,' calls "the immortal beauty—the goodness of God, that giveth us wits to conceive and hands to write." In other words, Dante and Shakespeare made it, in their "new life," their main purpose to "glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever."

"It may not be
That one who looks upon that light can
turn

To other object willingly his view;
For all the good that will may covet,
there

Is summed; and all elsewhere defective
Found complete."¹

This was the "all-too-precious" one, "the prize" for which "the proud full sail of Dante's great verse" was "bound." And, if Dante was that other poet, Shakespeare's aim or purpose in the Sonnets was to gain possession of the same great and most precious prize. For the one of whom and to

whom Shakespeare sings, saying, in the 105th sonnet—

"Fair, kind, and true, is all my argument,—

Fair, kind, and true, varying to other
words;

And in this change is my invention
spent,

Three themes in one, which wondrous
scope affords,"—

is the same one in three, and three in one, whose glory, as beheld by Dante, is thus spoken of by him:

"In that abyss
Of radiance clear and lofty, seemed,
methought,

Three orbs of triple hue clipt in one
bound;

One from another, one reflected seemed
As rainbow is from rainbow; and the
third

Seemed fire, breathed equally from both.
Oh speech,

How feeble and how faint art thou to
give

Conception birth! Yet this to what I
saw

Is less than little. Oh eternal light!
Sole in thyself that dwellest, and of
thyself

Sole understood, past, present, or to
come!

Thou smiledst; on that circling, which
on thee

Seemed as reflected splendour, while I
mused;

For I therein, methought, in its own
hue beheld

Our image painted; steadfastly
I therefore por'd upon the view."²

To Dante, as to Shakespeare, the "one" who is ever the same—"kind to-day, to-morrow kind," who is "fair, kind, and true," was neither an abstraction nor a Platonic idea. The "immortal beauty," as seen by both the poets, was one in the form of three,—three in the form of one—"Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords."

To the pursuit and attainment of the chief good, "the immortal

¹ Paradiso, xxxiii. 95-100.

² Ibid., xxxiii. 107-122.

beauty," Dante at an early time in his life dedicated all his thoughts, desires, and energies. In the songs and hymns of the "Vita Nuova" we find him saying:—

"Tell her,—'Madonna, with a faith so fast

His heart to yours is wrought,
That all his thoughts are bent on serving you ;

Yours, early, yours he shall be to the last.'"

Again:—

"Be this thy prayer wherever thou dost go ;—

Teach me the way to her whose praises blent

In all my lines,—their glorious ornament."

And in the last song of the "Vita Nuova" he says:—

"Then went I forth with sigh and heavy moan ;

And when I was alone

I said, and looked to heaven, her blessed seat,

O beauteous soul, who seeth thee is blest."

"After I had written this sonnet," he says in the comment annexed to it, "there appeared to me a wonderful vision, in which I saw things that made me determine to write no more of this dear saint, until I should be able to write of her more worthily; and of a surety she knows that I study to attain unto this with all my powers. So if it shall please Him, by whom all things live, to spare my life for some years longer, I hope to say that of her which never yet hath been said of any lady; and then may it please Him who is the Father of all good, to suffer my soul to see the glory of its mistress—that is, of this sainted Beatrice, who now abiding in glory, looketh upon the face of Him, *Qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus*."¹

Let this in the meantime suffice in proof of the identity of the theme and purpose of Shakespeare and Dante—the other poet "who

spent all his might" in composing the songs, hymns, and praises referred to in the Sonnets.

VI. The "verse" or poetry of the other poet is described in terms expressive of its strength, stateliness, and grandeur.

In the 86th sonnet Shakespeare uses the image of a majestic ship in full sail in describing the verse or poetical movement and measure of the poet referred to—

"Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,

Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,

That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse?"

Again, using the same figure in the 80th sonnet, he says:—

"But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,

The humble as the proudest sail doth bear;

My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.

Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,

Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride ;

Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,

He of tall building and of goodly pride.

Then if he thrive, and I be cast away,

The worst was this,—my love was my decay."

It has often been said that excellence only can appreciate excellence, and that a man's own ability, character, or genius is indicated in the estimate formed by him of the works or writings of another—more particularly of the works of another in the same art as that to which he himself has dedicated his powers. Nothing is easier and nothing more worthless than the criticism that consists either of miscellaneous commendation or promiscuous cen-

¹ Vita Nuova—Theodore Martin's translation.

sure, unless it be the criticism of some minute philosopher of the cobbler kind, whose eye, blind to the general excellence of what is before it, sees only the defect in the shaping and the fitting of the shoe. Of this latter kind of critics, Bacon, were he, for "the advancement of learning," to take a survey of the present state of literature, could report "no deficiency." For many, as if under the auspices of the director of a new society of minute philosophers, have been engaged for several years in measuring Shakespeare's feet; and now, after knowing the exact length or shortness of his syllabic feet, they would fain take the dimensions of his skull,—hoping thereby to get nearer to his brain and mind than they have hitherto got, by all their industry, diligence, and labour in counting syllables, numbering lines, and measuring feet. From the critics of Shakespeare we gladly turn to Shakespeare the critic. His criticism is appreciative and discriminative. It is so because the genius of the critic is capable and is sympathetic. It sees, discriminates, admires, and sympathises; and, appreciating what it sees, it expresses its commendation in terms the most exact, and, at the same time, the most appropriate. For never was a description more true to reality than is the representation of Dante's verse given here by Shakespeare. And that great verse was but the written image of Dante's grandly self-reliant mind; for the strength, ease, and majesty of Dante's poetry were but the expression of Dante's magnanimity. His "plain, heroic magnitude of mind,"—the singleness of his aim, the simplicity of his character, and the strength of his virtue,—found fixedness and perpetual renovation in his faith, in his contemplation of "the immor-

tal beauty," and in his communion with God.

From composing songs, worthless, frivolous, or trivial, and from darkening his Muse's power "to lend base subjects light," Shakespeare had withdrawn his Muse, as he tells us (Sonnet c.), to sing of the immortal beauty which is his theme in all the Sonnets; and Dante also tells us in a sonnet to Cino di Pistoja, that he found little pleasure in any form of song save that to which he had consecrated all his studies and all his powers.

"Friend Cino, I believed your rhymes
and I
Had fairly shaken hands to meet no
more:
Since it were meet my bark, now far
from shore,
Ploughed other seas, beneath another
sky."

Dante's "bark" here mentioned is the proud sail, the ship "of tall building and of goodly pride," with which Shakespeare in the 80th sonnet contrasts his "saucy bark," his "worthless boat."

At the commencement of the "Paradiso," in the second canto, Dante, when formally setting out on his third grand voyage, bound for the prize of "the immortal beauty," left behind him the words which seem to have been present to Shakespeare's mind when he wrote the Sonnets, in which he gives the epithetic description of Dante's verse:—

"All ye who in *small bark* have follow-
ing sailed,
Eager to listen, on the adventurous
track
Of my proud keel, that singing cuts its
way,
Backwards return with speed, and your
own shores
Revisit, nor put out to open sea,
Where, losing me, perchance you may
remain
Bewilder'd in deep maze. The way I
pass

Ne'er yet was run. . . .
 Ye other few who have outstretched the
 neck
 Timely for food of angels, on which
 here
 They live, yet never know satiety,
Through the deep brine ye fearless may
 put out
Your vessel, marking well the furrow
 broad
 Before you in the wave, that on both
 sides
 Equal returns."¹

In the twenty-third canto, Dante again makes use of the same figure :—

"The track our venturous keel must
 furrow, brooks
No unribbed pinnace, no self-sparing
 *pilot."*²

From these statements of Dante, it appears that Shakespeare in a few epithets, and with masterly ease and skill, sets Dante's own picture of his verse most vividly before us.

VII. The verse of the other poet is described as distinguished not only by its strength, stateliness, and grandeur, but also by its exquisite polish and refinement.

Here let the words of Shakespeare, in the 85th sonnet, be again reviewed :—

"Comments of your praise, richly
 compil'd,
Reserve their character, with golden
 quill
And precious phrase by all the Muses
 fil'd.

In polish'd form of well-refined pen."

It is unnecessary to verify or even to illustrate the characteristics of Dante's verse, here singled out and commended by Shakespeare. The songs and sonnets of the "*Vita Nuova*," and very many of the "*hymns*" in the "*Divina Com-*

media" and in the "*Convito*," are perhaps unrivalled in the delicacy of their sentiment, and in the elegance and refinement of their diction. They were indeed written "*with golden quill*," and "*in polished form of well-refined pen*." The combination of manly strength and womanly sensibility in Dante, as imaged in his writings, is perhaps his most remarkable characteristic. The force of a giant is in him tempered by the gentleness of the most delicate and sensitive woman. This singular combination of strength and sensibility, of grandeur and delicacy, of virtue and beauty, is that which is so highly commended by Shakespeare.

One quotation from the commencement of the "*Commedia*," and another from the conclusion of it, will suffice to verify the description of Dante's writings as consisting of "*precious phrase by all the Muses filed*."

In words almost literally rendered by Chaucer in his "*Temple of Fame*," Dante, at the commencement of the second canto of the "*Inferno*," thus invokes the help of the Muses and of Memory or Mind :—

"O Muses! O high genius! now vouch-
 safe
Your aid. O Mind, that all I saw hast
 kept
Safe in a written record, here thy
 worth
And eminent endowments come to
 *proof."*³

In the second book of the "*Paradiso*," we find these words :—

"Minerva breathes the gale ;
Apollo guides me ; and another Nine
To my rapt sight the arctic beams
 *reveal."*⁴

Here again, as in the preceding

¹ Paradiso, ii. 1-8, 11-17.

³ Inferno, ii. 7-10.

² Ibid., xxiii. 66, 67.

⁴ Paradiso, ii. 8-10.

instance, it would seem as if Shakespeare had selected Dante's own statements, and given them in the Sonnets, as the best fitted to express the most marked characteristics of Dante's phraseology, style, and verse.

VIII. Shakespeare affirms of the other poet, that he had put forth his utmost skill, or had spent all his might in the composition of the hymns and comments of praise referred to.

In the 80th sonnet he says—

"A better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might."

In the concluding words of the "Vita Nuova," which we quoted under the fifth head or particular of our argument, Dante informs the reader, that in order to write more worthily of Beatrice than he had previously done, so that he might say that of her which had never been said of any lady, he made it his study with all his powers to attain the qualifications necessary to the prosecution and accomplishment of his great enterprise. What pains he took and what labours he underwent in qualifying himself for his great work are briefly recorded in the "Convito," where he also gives (if we know how to use it) the key to what is signified by Beatrice, "the glorious lady of his mind," and to much otherwise mysterious in the "Commedia" and in the "Vita Nuova."

Notwithstanding all his preparatory labours and studious discipline, and all his great, varied, and extraordinary abilities, he confesses again and again that the dignity, beauty, and glory of his theme far

surpassed his utmost poetic power and skill. It is more particularly—as might be expected—in the "Paradiso" that he makes these confessions. Describing the smile of Beatrice, he thus sings in the twenty-third canto:—

"Now, were all
Those tongues to sound, that have, on
sweetest milk
Of Polyhymnia and her sisters, fed
And fattened; not with all their help
to boot,
Unto the thousandth parcel of the
truth.
My song might shadow forth that saintly
smile,
How merely, in her saintly looks, it
wrought;
And, with such figuring of Paradise,
The sacred strain must leap, like one
that meets
A sudden interruption to his road.
But he who thinks how ponderous the
theme,
And that 'tis laid upon a mortal shoul-
der,
May pardon, if it tremble with the bur-
den." ¹

Again, in the thirtieth canto, as he rises nearer and nearer to the height of his great argument, and sees more and more of "the immortal beauty" that unveils itself to his ravished vision, he thus writes:—

"Love
With loss of other object, forced me
bend
Mine eyes on Beatrice once again.
If all that hitherto is told of her
Were in one praise concluded, 'twere
too weak
To furnish out this turn. Mine eyes
did look
On beauty, such as I believe in sooth
Not merely to exceed our human; but
That, save its Maker, none can to the
full
Enjoy it. At this point, o'erpowered I
fail;
Unequal to my theme; as never bard
Of buskin or of sock hath failed before.

¹ Paradiso, xxiii. 53-65.

For as the sun doth to the feeblest sight,
E'en so, remembrance of that witching
smile,

Hath dispossessed my spirit of itself.

Not from the day when on this earth
I first

Beheld her charms, up to that view of
them,

Have I with song applausive ever
ceased

To follow; but now follow them no
more;

*My course here bounded, as each artist's is
When it hath touched the limit of his
skill."*¹

Truly did Shakespeare say of Dante—that other poet—that in the praise of “the immortal beauty” he had spent all his might. In saying this, Shakespeare, as in the preceding instances, seems as if he took up the words of Dante and gave to them new and vivid expression in his appreciative and sympathetic criticism of the graceful and stately verse of the great Florentine.

With a confession of his own insufficiency, and an acknowledgment of his obligations to heavenly grace and illumination, and with the expression of his eager desire to know and enjoy more and more of the divine light, blessedness, and glory, Dante concludes his majestic and unrivalled song:—

“As one

Who, versed in geometric lore, would fain
Measure the circle; and though pondering long

And deeply, that beginning, which he
needs,

Finds not: e'en such was I, intent to
scan

The novel wonder, and trace out the
form,

How to the circle fitted, and therein

How placed: but the flight was not for
my wing;

Had not a flash darted athwart my
mind,

Unfolding, in my soul, what it had
sought.

Here vigour failed the lowering fantasy,
But yet the will rolled onward, like a
wheel

In even motion, by that love impelled
Which moves the sun in heaven and all
the stars.”²

IX. It was not till some time after Shakspeare had begun to write his Sonnets, that he became acquainted with the writings of the other poet on the same theme as that of which he sings in all the Sonnets; and, as he informs us, the effect produced on his mind by the transcendent excellence of the hymns of that other writer was so depressing and disheartening, that for a time he gave up the attempt to write anything more on the great theme to which he had consecrated his Muse.

From what is said in the 79th sonnet, it would appear that before Shakespeare had studied the works of Dante he had devoted his powers to the composition of some sonnets on the same theme as that of which Dante sings. This seems to be what is meant by the words—

*“Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another
place.”*

The time when Shakespeare “alone” did call upon the aid by which such gentle grace had been imparted to his verse, was the time when as yet he was not aware of the fact that another poet—Dante—had written with so much learning, grace, and majesty on the theme which he had prescribed to himself in the Sonnets. He had selected a definite and specific aspect of a great theme, and, as he thought, he alone had set it forth with all its own gentle grace. He

¹ Paradiso, xxx. 13-34.

² Ibid., xxxiii. 122-135.

imagined that his idea and his mode of embodying it in his "gracious numbers," had been exclusively his own—an idea and a method truly original. But his more extended reading, observation, and study had taught him that "there is nothing new under the sun." For what he accounted an idea altogether original and exclusively his own, had been conceived and elaborated by another poet long before it had entered into the mind and engaged the pen of William Shakespeare. A discovery such as this was of itself fitted to depress the mind of the poet: it tended naturally to cool, if not to extinguish, the ardour of the enthusiasm with which he had cherished and developed his favourite idea. But in the case of a strong and truly great mind, a temporary depression of spirit begets an effect altogether different from what is produced on a mind of high aspirations but of weak faculty or little capability. Under the discipline of despondency a loftier idea of excellence is conceived: the good desired presents itself in new and more exalted forms to the imagination, exciting within the heart new and more intense longings after it, while these again set the imagination and the intellect a-working to devise new and more effective methods of attaining to the desired end. Out of this inward cogitation and sighing, the mind, as if gathering strength out of weakness and resolution out of despondency, rises, and girding itself for new labours and conflicts, goes forth to duty, like the sun out of an eclipse, adorned like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing like a strong

man to run a race. If in despondency we learn to cherish higher ideas of excellence, and lower ideas of our own past performances, we also learn along with these ideas the force of that faith to which all things are possible. So at least it was in the experience of Shakespeare, as recorded by himself. Out of the despondency produced by the discovery that Dante, with almost incomparable ability and skill, had written hymns and comments of the praise of the heavenly wisdom, and the "immortal beauty," poetically figured in Beatrice, Shakespeare gained fresh resolution and new reinforcement. For, after having ceased for a time to compose any sonnets or "songs and praises," that he might give himself to meditation on the theme as expounded, developed, and extolled by Dante, when he resumed his self-prescribed task, it was to treat of his theme with a fulness, richness, and magnificence of thought and imagery, and with a selectedness, strength, vigour, elegance, and beauty of diction worthy of the genius of England's great and gentle poet, William Shakespeare. But though the thought, imagery, and style of both Dante and Shakespeare exhibit their great powers, and are worthy of their genius, mind, and art, yet these two gifted and singularly able writers alike confess that the glory of their theme far exceeded the measure and the reach of their ability and skill, even when taxed and stretched to the utmost possible extent. With reference to this, as also to the effect produced on his mind by Dante's writings, Shakespeare, in the 83d sonnet, says:—

LXXXIII.

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set.
I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt;

And therefore have I slept in your report,
 That you yourself, being extant, well might show
 How far a modern quill doth come too short,
 Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
 This silence for my sin you did impute,
 Which shall be most my glory, being dumb;
 For I impair not beauty being mute,
 When others would give life, and bring a tomb.
 There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
 Than both your poets can in praise devise.

To the same effect, and illustrative of the transcendent excellence and boundless glory of the theme of both the poets, is the 84th sonnet:—

LXXXIV.

Who is it that says most? which can say more
 Than this rich praise,—that you alone are you?
 In whose confine immured is the store,
 Which should example where your equal grew?
 Lean penury within that pen doth dwell,
 That to his subject lends not some small glory;
 But he that writes of you, if he can tell
 That you are you, so dignifies his story,
 Let him but copy what in you is writ,
 Not making worse what nature made so clear,
 And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
 Making his style admired everywhere.
 You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
 Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

These two sonnets, belonging to the group in which the other poet and his writings are referred to, are given in full, because they verify and illustrate what we have stated respecting the period of Shakespeare's "silence," or the pause in the composition of his Sonnets that followed his becoming acquainted with the writings of Dante. That "silence" was not caused by the excellence of Dante's verse, considered as the mere product of poetic genius, art, or skill.

"No, neither he, nor his compeers by night

Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
 He, nor that affable familiar ghost
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,

As victors, of my silence cannot boast."

Shakespeare was not unconscious of his own poetic powers. Nor was his that voluntary humility

which is another name for abjectness of spirit. Without any pride or inordinate self-esteem, he avows here that he was not afraid or ashamed to deal out in mere poetry "measure for measure" with Dante or any of his illustrious "compeers." Neither Dante nor Beatrice, any more than Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, struck him dead or astonished his verse.

"I was not sick of any fear from thence."

But whether conscious or unconscious of his own poetic powers, it was something else than the poetic ability, skill, and glory of Dante that for a time reduced Shakespeare's muse to silence.

"Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,

Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,

That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,

Making their tomb the womb in which
they grew?

Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to
write

Above a mortal pitch, that struck me
dead?

No— . . .

*But when your countenance fill'd up
his line,*

*Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled
mine."*

The feelings produced in him by
this discovery take in expression
the form of a "Farewell" in the
Sonnets that immediately follow
the group under consideration.

These sonnets of the "Farewell,"
beginning with the 87th, develop
the sentiment of the 81st and
the 82d in the group before us.
In the 81st, anticipating his own
decay and death, and the oblivion
in which his name should be for-
gotten, he affirms the perpetuity
and the glory of his theme: nay,
more,—he foretells, as with pro-
phetic certainty, that his verse
would be the permanent memorial
of the life, name, and glory of the
immortal beauty and love of which
he sings.

LXXXI.

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entomb'd in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
And tongues to be, your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead.

You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen)

Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

It is as if the poet said, "What-
ever may become of me or of my
name, the theme of which I sing—
His name—shall endure for ever:
His name shall be continued as
long as the sun; men shall be
blessed in him: all nations shall
call Him blessed." This is his
confident expectation and hope,
although, at the same time, he is
conscious that neither his name
nor verse is worthy to be associ-
ated with the name and verse of
the other poet referred to, and
infinitely less worthy to be asso-
ciated with the life, honour, and
glory of that One, the "ever the
same," whose being shall be re-
hearsed through eternity "when all
the breathers of this world are dead."

This consciousness of unworthi-
ness, together with a declaration
of the sincerity of his heart and
the simplicity of his aim and
purpose, finds expression in the
82d sonnet. Unlike many others
who had formally proclaimed
their purpose to sing "hymns
of heavenly beauty and love,"
Shakespeare, accustomed to the
art of playing a play within a
play, conceals his art, and lays his
Muse under restraint, even when
he calls on her to sing of the
loftiest and most glorious theme.
Conscious of his own purpose, and
knowing that He whose praise
he sings could read the meaning
figured in his words, he virtually
avows the sincerity, depth, and

ardour of his love when using language that in sound seems to convey a meaning very different from that which is really intended by him.

LXXXII.

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore may'st without attain't o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise;
And therefore art enforc'd to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days.
And do so, love; yet when they have devis'd
What strained touches rhetoric can find,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathiz'd
In true plain words, by thy true-telling friend;
And their gross painting might be better us'd,
Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abus'd.

The manner in which Shakespeare speaks of the writings of others generally, who had composed songs in praise of him whose praise is his own theme, and who had formally dedicated their words to this "fair subject," is very different from the manner in which he speaks of the "comments of praise," written by Dante, the other poet. This very notable difference cannot have escaped the attention and notice of the most cursory reader. Over against the flourishes and "strained touches" of a heartless rhetoric Shakespeare has no hesitation in setting his own "true plain words." But when he thinks of Dante's verse—the hymns of the "golden quill" or of the "polished and worthier pen"—the songs and praises of "that able spirit," that other and "better spirit,"—his own verse is astonished; his Muse is struck dead, and he himself becomes sick and faint. And yet, as we have seen, the cause of this was not in the mere poetic excellence of Dante's verse, but in the glory of Dante's theme.

"But when your countenance fill'd up
his line,
Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled
mine."

Whose countenance is that which is here spoken of as filling up the line of the other poet referred to? The mere statement of this question, considering the connection in which Shakespeare uses the word "countenance" in relation to the "line" of the other poet, is sufficient to show the utter absurdity of the supposition so prevalent among the critics that the countenance here mentioned denotes the patronage of Lord Herbert or Lord Southampton. Only to conjecture, prosaic, or spirit-rapping criticism could such an answer occur; and only to credulity itself could it appear probable. And yet the cautious and impartial historian and critic Hallam gave it as his opinion that it might be held as proved (although some things were yet needed to complete the proof) that the reference is to the "countenance" of Lord Herbert!¹ Without asking the question, how could the countenance of Lord

¹ See Hallam's *Literature of Europe*, part 3, chap. v., sections 48-50. Hallam's critical judgment proceeded on the assumption that the Sonnets were the utterances of "excessive and misplaced affection"—an assumption expressly contradicted by Shakespeare in Sonnet cv.

Herbert fill up the line of a poet? or how could the discovery that Lord Herbert's countenance filled up the line of some other poet so affect Shakespeare's mind and Muse as to prompt him to say, "Then lacked I matter; that enfeebled mine"? we get the answer to our question from Shakespeare himself. The countenance and the eyes go together. Both belong to the same person. In the place before us, the countenance or face signifies the image, likeness, resemblance, or glory of him whose praise is celebrated in the verse of the poet referred to. And what Shakespeare means is, that when he saw

in the "line" or "verse" of that other the image or glory of his own theme reflected with incomparable beauty and splendour, he became poetically as one "struck dead." There "was no more spirit in him." That this is his meaning is proved by what he says of the "eyes," to which he ascribes such wonderful powers and effects in the 78th sonnet. The eyes and the countenance belong to the same one; they are the signs, expressions, and demonstrations of "the immortal beauty"—not of the beauty (however excellent and admirable it may have been) of Lord Herbert.

LXXVIII.

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse,
And found such fair assistance in my verse,
As every *alien* pen hath got my use,
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing,
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing,
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and born of thee:
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And Arts with thy sweet graces graced be.
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

Whose are the "eyes" that here are said to have "taught the dumb on high to sing"? And what, as distinguished from the "countenance," are the "eyes"? When describing Wisdom under the figure of a fair lady, Dante says that her eyes are the demonstrations, and her smiles the persuasions, of Wisdom (see the "Convito"). And here what Shakespeare affirms is that Wisdom, or "eternal love" in the form of Wisdom, teaches the dumb on high to sing. In saying this, he not only intimates that he had often invoked the aid of this Wisdom, but he also gives almost word for word what is said of Wisdom

where we read—"Wisdom openeth the mouth of the dumb, and maketh the tongues of babes eloquent."¹ To this wisdom Shakespeare avows in this sonnet, as in many of the others, that he was indebted for all his ability, art, or skill. To Dante, the symbol of this wisdom was the poetical or figured form called "Beatrice"; to Shakespeare it was the anonymous form of manly and youthful beauty, figured in the introductory series of the Sonnets—a figure for which he was indebted to Dante. For although Dante used the figure of Beatrice as the expression of heavenly wisdom, beauty, and virtue, he represented the heavenly love

¹ Wisdom of Solomon, x. 21.

itself under the form of a young man of matchless beauty and grace, who appeared to him, and, taking possession of his heart, so disposed of it as to place the happiness of Dante where it was, independent of accident, policy, time, force, or change (*"Vita Nuova"*). Shakespeare selected this figure and made it the "master" of his "passion," the "lord of his love," in the first and main series of his Sonnets, 1.-CXXVI. But for the full expression of his poetical invention, idea, or device, it was necessary to add to this form of manly beauty the figure of the woman that appears in what may be called the "handmaid," or auxiliary series of sonnets with which his great poem concludes, CXXVII.-CLIV. This complex figure, as pictured and described in the 20th sonnet, contains in it and expresses the poetical invention, idea, or device, on which all the sonnets depend. It is "the master mistress" of Shakespeare's "passion." And the critic able to interpret and expound that 20th sonnet ought to be able to interpret every sentence, from first to last, in all the sonnets.

If the other poet referred to is Dante, if the poetic figure in the introductory sonnets is derived from the *"Vita Nuova"* of Dante, and if Shakespeare did not know the writings of Dante till some time after he had begun to compose his sonnets, then the sonnets that are addressed to the lady or "mistress" of his passion were the earliest written by him. Some of them were, in all probability, the "Sugred Sonnets" of Shakespeare referred to by Francis Meres in the *'Palladis Tamia,'* or *'Wits Treasury,'* published in 1598. We say "some of them," not all, for these reasons. The sonnets of the concluding series—CXXVII.-CLIV.—are of very unequal excellence or poetic merit. Some of them are equal in

every respect to any of the sonnets of the main series, but others of them are much inferior to the standard and elevation attained to in those addressed to the master of the poet's passion. The most natural and probable explanation of this inferiority in the "handmaid" series is the comparative inexperience of the poet in the art of sonnet-writing at the time when he composed the concluding series, which he himself divides, according to the thought expressed in them, into two very distinct, well-defined, and really different parts, sub-poems, or groups—the first including Sonnets CXXVII.-CXLV., the second including Sonnets CXLVI.-CLIV.

Two of the sonnets of this "handmaid" series were composed, as we certainly know, at an early time, in what may be called the sonnetic period of Shakespeare's life. For, differing only in some slight verbal expressions from the form in which they appeared in Thorpe's edition of 1609, they were published in 1599 in *'The Passionate Pilgrim,'* by W. Jaggard. The two sonnets thus surreptitiously published in that year are the 138th and the 144th (CXXXVIII., CXLIV.) They both belong to the first division or group of those addressed to the lady or "mistress" of Shakespeare's passion, — a group consisting of thoughts and sentiments not only different from those expressed in the main series, but different also from the thoughts and sentiments of the sonnets in the second division of the "handmaid" series.

In the writing of the "handmaid" sonnets, it would seem as if Sir Philip Sidney had been Shakespeare's poetic model in this kind of composition. To Sir Philip, Shakespeare was indebted for much of the thought and imagery set by him so felicitously in the *"Venus*

and Adonis." Many indications of his indebtedness to the "all-accomplished" Sidney are also found in Shakespeare's dramatic writings. It is a fair enough question whether the idea of Falstaff, and more particularly his "Windsor Forest" experience, was not derived from what Sir Philip Sidney says of the amorous and fickle knight who, under the name of "Pamphilos," figures so ignobly and ludicrously in a scene described in the second book of the 'Arcadia.' Be this as it may, the sentiment and imagery in many of the "hand-maid" sonnets bear a very striking resemblance to sentiments and figures found in the 'Arcadia' and in the songs and sonnets of Sidney. This is also true of the sonnets addressed by Shakespeare to the "master" of his passion; but in this series there is also so much that seems directly derived from the "Vita Nuova" and the "Divina Commedia," and there is such "I know not what" about the whole of these sonnets, that it is extremely probable that, without withdrawing his love from the noble Sidney, he made the greater poet Dante his model in the composition of the confessions, meditations, songs, and comments of praise addressed to the "master" of his passion.

Sidney and Dante appear to have been the poetic masters under whom the genius of Shakespeare was trained till it attained to its marvellously developed perfection. Intermediate between these there appears to have been another to whom Shakespeare was under the greatest obligations, for to him he was indebted for guidance and instruction in things spiritual and eternal. By the writings of Augustine, Shakespeare seems to have been directed in the time of his great sorrow to the fountain of life and everlasting consolation. And

so familiar did he become with some of the writings of Augustine, and such use did he make of them in the composition of the Sonnets, that it can be shown with a certainty beyond all reasonable doubt that Shakespeare's mind was thoroughly saturated with the thoughts, imagery, and sentiments of the renowned son of Monica. In the writings of Augustine Shakespeare found the grand idea, called by him "the master mistress" of his "passion,—the "invention" which gives unity, consistency, expressiveness, and mystery to all the sonnets. Nor is there in any sonnet of the whole series a sentence or sentiment that remains locked in mystery after the great Augustinian idea has been applied to it. To Augustine more than to Sidney and Dante Shakespeare was indebted for the contents of his Sonnets; and to Augustine more than to all others we are indebted for the key to the interpretation of the idea, the figures, and the sentiments expressed in "Shakespeare's Sonnets," and "A Lover's Complaint, by William Shakespeare."

What, it may be here asked, is meant by the word "alien" in the 78th sonnet—the first of the group which we have passed under review?

"Every *alien* pen hath got my use,
And under thee their poesy disperse."

John Davies of Hereford, in the "Scourge of Folly" (1607), in addressing his words "To our English Terence, Mr Will. Shakespeare," gives what serves as a comment on the statement before us.

"Some say, Good Will, which I in sport
do sing,
Hadst thou not plaid some kingly parts
in sport,
Thou hadst bin a companion for a king,
And beene a king among the meaner
sort.

Some others raile, but raile as they
 think fit,
 Thou hast norayling, but a reigning wit.
*And honestly thou sow'st which they do
 reape,*
 So to increase their stock which they
 do keepe."

The general idea conveyed alike by the words of Davies and of Shakespeare seems to be that other writers of a very different class from Shakespeare surreptitiously appropriated to themselves, and published for their own ends, some of the poems composed by Shakespeare, and by him designed for purposes entirely different from those to which they were perverted by those literary thieves. Of this a notable illustration was given in the miscellany of songs, sonnets, and short poems surreptitiously published by W. Jaggard, under the title, 'The Passionate Pilgrim.' What does Shakespeare mean by calling such writers or publishers aliens? "Who are aliens?" asks Augustine, and he answers the question thus: "If thou wilt know who they are, read of them in the Psalm that says, 'Aliens' sons are those whose mouth hath spoken vanity.' They are the Ziphites who flourish for a time."¹ The alien pens mentioned by Shakespeare are the pens of those who write vanity. From the time that Shakespeare began to call on the Heavenly Wisdom and the Eternal Love for help to his Muse, he ceased to have sympathy with such writers. Though he lived among them, they became to him as aliens, or as the Ziphites, of whom David, while hiding himself among them, said, "Aliens have risen up against me."

Those who are familiar with Dante's writings can easily add to the illustrative proofs here adduced for the identification of Dante, founded on the description of his

writings given by Shakespeare, compared with the self-revealed characteristics and express statements of Dante. Nor can this process of inquiry and comparison fail to prove both interesting and profitable to those who will take part in it. Contact with the minds of Dante and Shakespeare, even for the purpose of comparing the statements of the one with the statements of the other, must be productive of the best intellectual and moral results. But after this comparison has been completed in so far as the verifying of Shakespeare's description of Dante's writings is concerned, there will remain for the student of the Sonnets and the student of Dante an exercise of even greater interest—namely, that of examining and comparing the sentiments, phraseology, and imagery of Shakespeare's Sonnets, with the thought, forms of expression, and imagery in the "Vita Nuova," the "Commedia" and the "Convito" of Dante. The argument which we have conducted in this article has been founded exclusively on a comparison of the description of the writings of the other poet, as given by Shakespeare, with the prominent and unquestionable characteristics of Dante's verse. If by this comparison Dante is identified as the poet to whom allusion is made in the group of sonnets, LXXXIII.-LXXXVI., this position and argument will be greatly strengthened by a comparison of the sentiments and figures of Shakespeare in the other sonnets with the figures and sentiments of Dante in many places of his writings. This further inquiry is suggested by the argument which we have here prosecuted, and more particularly by the words in the 79th sonnet:—

¹ Augustine on Psalm liv.

"He lends thee virtue, and he stole
that word
From thy behaviour; beauty doth he
give,
And found it in thy cheek; he can
afford
No praise to thee, but what in thee
doth live."

With this compare what is said
by Dante of Beatrice, as quoted
under the eighth head of our argu-
ment, and generally throughout
the "Paradiso."

Let the following words in the
82d sonnet be compared with the
words of Dante in the twenty-
eighth canto of the "Paradiso," and
let their relative connection be
noted :—

"Thou art as fair in knowledge as in
hue."

"The circle whose swift cause enwheels
The universal frame, answers to that
Which is supreme in knowledge and in
love."¹

These quotations from the sonnets of the group before us are here offered merely for the purpose of whetting the desire for that more extended comparison of the sentiment, figures, and phraseology in Shakespeare and in Dante, which proves not only that Dante was the other poet referred to by Shakespeare, but also that, from the writings of Dante, Shakespeare derived many of the ideas, figures, and forms of expression found in his great sonnetic poem. But if thoughts, figures, and phrases from Dante are found in the Sonnets, it is highly probable that traces of Shakespeare's familiarity with the writings of Dante will appear in those dramas of Shakespeare which were written or amended by him after the time when he began to make Dante's writings his very special study. That this is not a mere conjecture, guess, or supposi-

tion on our part, is borne out by the statement of a diligent and accomplished student of the writings of Dante and of Shakespeare. Mr Lowell, 'Among my Books,' in an elaborate and appreciative article, "Shakespeare Once More," draws attention to the remarkable resemblance between the thought and even expression in a part of Hamlet's soliloquy, and in two places in the "Commedia."

The place referred to in Hamlet is that in which it is said :—

"Who would these fardels bear,

But that the dread of something after
death,

The undiscover'd country, from whose
bourne

No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we
have,

Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of
us all;

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of
thought;

And enterprises of great pith and
moment,

With this regard, their currents turn
awry,

And lose the name of action."

The places in the "Commedia"
are the following :—

"And like one who unwill's what
he willed, and with new thoughts
changes his purpose, so that he wholly
quits the thing commenced, such I
made me on that dim coast; for with
thinking I wasted the enterprise that
had been so quick in its commence-
ment."

"If I have rightly understood thy
words,' replied that shade of the mag-
nanimous, 'thy soul is smit with cow-
ard fear, which often encumbers men,
so that it turns them back from hon-
oured enterprise; as false seeing does a
startled beast. To free thee from this
dread, I will tell thee why I came, and
what I heard in the first moment when
I took pity on thee.'²

¹ Paradiso, xxviii. 64-66.

² Inferno, ii. 37-51.

"'Why is thy soul so perplexed,' said my Master, 'that thou slackenest thy pace? What matters all this whispering to thee? Come after me, and let the people talk. Stand firm as a tower that never quivers at the blast of the wind; for he in whose mind one thought sprouts upon another always gets wide of his mark, for the one slackens the activity of the other.'"¹

The resemblance between the thought and expression in these places and the thought and words of Hamlet, taken in connection with the many quotations from Dante given by us in our identification of the other poet referred to in the Sonnets, serves to confirm the probability that traces of Shakespeare's studies in Dante will be found in not a few of the plays, seeing that they are so abundant in the Sonnets.

In suggesting that the students of Shakespeare should direct very special attention to the writings of Sidney and Dante, and to certain of the works of Augustine, we do not ignore the fact that in some comments on Shakespeare's plays and poems, references and allusions are made to the three great writers whom we have named. Simpson, in his '*Philosophy of Shakespeare's Sonnets*,' says of Sonnets xcvi.-xcix., "These three sonnets should be compared with a beautiful and well-known passage in S. Augustine's '*Confessions*' (x. 8). The identity of words and imagery in the two writers will suggest an identity in their meaning." Had Simpson followed up his own suggestion, he might have obtained in Augustine the key for the interpretation of every sentence in the Sonnets of Shakespeare. Incidental allusions to Dante are also found in Simpson's '*Philosophy of the Sonnets*,' and in the writings of

other commentators. And although Gerald Massey's attempt to read the riddle of the Sonnets by the help of what may be called spirit-rapping criticism, served only as an illustration of '*Love's Labour's Lost*,' yet Massey rendered great service to the students of Shakespeare by indicating some very notable instances in which Shakespeare derived his poetic and figurative ideas from Sir Philip Sidney. Massey's guidance in this direction has been most effectively followed by Fritz Krauss, who, in an article in the *German Year-Book* (1881) on "*The Black Beauty*" of Shakespeare's Sonnets, gives an elaborate, instructive, and most interesting view of sentiments and figures in the Sonnets which have their parallels in Sidney's '*Arcadia*,' or in his Sonnets. But notwithstanding all that has been done with the view of tracing the literary sources from which Shakespeare derived very much of what has been set for all time in his writings, it may be said that his relations to Sidney, Augustine, and Dante, offer a new region of investigation to the students of Shakespeare. If he admired and studied Sidney's writings, it is highly probable that he admired and studied the writings commended by Sidney. And we are prepared to show, beyond the possibility of gainsaying, that among the books thoroughly studied and largely used by Shakespeare, were some of the writings of Philip de Mornay, the noble and devout French Huguenot. If Shakespeare studied the writings of Dante, making them his grand models, it is highly probable that he also studied some of the writings of the other Italian poets. Mr Hunter, in his '*New Illustrations of Shakespeare*,' has

¹ *Purgatorio*, v. 10-18.

shown that for not a little in "The Tempest" he seems to have been indebted to Ariosto, and it can easily be proved that he had very carefully studied some of the poetic works of Petrarch. Attracted by "Beatrice," Shakespeare could not be insensible to the charms of "Laura." But his love is neither Beatrice nor Laura: it is not even Sidney's Stella. It is that in which Beatrice and Laura and Stella live, move, and have their being—"Eternal love renewed in love's fresh case" (cvi.iii).

If our main position has been established, that Dante is the other poet referred to by Shakespeare, then Shakespeare's Sonnets can no longer be regarded as the "free outcome of a poetic imagination" (Delius), or as the poetic exercises of a mind delighting in the play and riot of its own vigorous and versatile powers. Any such view of the Sonnets is as contrary to statements frequently repeated in them, as it is inconsistent with the fact that the theme of the Sonnets is essentially the same as that of Dante's great song.

"If my dear love were but the child of state,

It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,

As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,

Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.

No; it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thrall'd discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls:

It fears not policy, that *Heretic*,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours,

But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.

To this I witness call the fools of time,
Which die for goodness, who have liv'd for crime."—(cxxiv.)

It follows, also, that every inter-

pretation that represents these Sonnets as giving expression to sentiments, feelings, or ideas frivolous, sensual, sottish, or vile, must of necessity be erroneous—false to the Sonnets, and false to Shakespeare. To all such criticisms and critics, Shakespeare, as if paraphrasing the words of the Apostle, "Who is he that condemneth?" says in the 121st sonnet:—

"Tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd,

When not to be receives reproach of being,

And the just pleasure lost, which is so deem'd

Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing.
For why should others' false adulterate eyes

Give salutation to my sportive blood?

Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,

Which in their wills count bad what I think good?

No,—I am that I am; and they that level

At my abuses, reckon up their own:

I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel;

By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown,

Unless this general evil they maintain,—

All men are bad, and in their badness reign."

The identification of Dante as the other poet referred to, serves to confirm and illustrate the position that Shakespeare's Sonnets are really "The Song of William Shakespeare's new life." This position can be established on grounds altogether independent of the argument for the identification of Dante as the other poet; but when it has been proved that the theme of the Sonnets is no vulgar, sensual, or even Platonic love, but is the love which is spiritual, heavenly, and divine—that of which Sidney sings in the sonnet in which he consecrates his soul to God, saying—

"Then farewell, world; thy uttermost
I see;
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in
me"¹

—then the one position is to the other as the pillars were in Solomon's temple. In the one was strength, in the other was stability. These songs of the new life of Shakespeare begin with that which is natural, they advance to that which is spiritual, and they ascend to that which is eternal. In keeping with this is the scale of beauty in these sonnets, as consisting of beauty external, internal, and immortal. By successive steps the poet in these "songs of degrees" rises from the gates of death and the grave (Sonnet i.) to the gate of heaven (xxix.); and in the 125th he sings the triumphant song with which the main series, addressed to "the master" of his passion, is concluded:—

"Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honour-
ing,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or
ruining?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and
favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much
rent,
For compound sweet foregoing simple
savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent?
No; let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but
free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows
no art,
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborn'd Informer! a
true soul,
When most impeach'd, stands least in
thy control."

Were it not that critical conjec-

ture and literary credulity are alike lawless and inexplicable, it might be thought that no reader of sane mind could suppose that the poet who wrote that sonnet and the 25th, in both of which he contrasts his own happy state with the precarious bliss of those who depend for their felicity on the favours and patronage of princes, intended only in the rest of the sonnets to contradict and give the lie to his own sentences, and to prostitute his mighty powers by laying himself and all that he loved at the feet of a fellow-mortal such as Lord Pembroke or Lord Southampton. Let the reader, after perusing the 25th sonnet, study the 105th, and, after having done this, let him meditate on the words of Shakespeare in this, the last completed sonnet of the century of songs to the master of his passion; and if he be unbiassed or unprejudiced—uncommitted to theory or lawless conjecture—can he, without violence to all the laws of reason and of legitimate exegesis and criticism, refuse to assent to the position that in these particular sonnets (xxv., cv., cxxv.) Shakespeare, like Dante, speaks of a love which is above change, humour, or caprice,—even that love which, as eternal, measureless, divine, "passeth knowledge"? But if in these sonnets his theme is "the immortal beauty—the goodness of that God who giveth us wits to conceive and hands to write" (Sidney)—then in all the sonnets this beauty, this goodness, this truth, is his invariable theme. He himself, in answering the question why he keeps constantly to one method in the handling of his theme, says in Sonnet lxxvi.:—

¹ Sidney's Sonnets and Translations, Works, vol. iii., edition 1725. In the folio edition of the 'Arcadia,' it is the Philip Sidney never before imprinted."

"O know, sweet love, I always write
of you,

And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:

For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is
told."

The theme is one, the method is one; and by both theme and method, through the grand device or invention which all the sonnets expound, and on which they all depend, the whole series from first to last is so articulated that these seemingly "unjointed and scattered" sonnets grow out of each other, as the branches, buds, leaves, flowers, and fruits grow out of the stem of a vigorous tree; or it may be said that they are compacted and fitted into each other like the stones set in a triumphal arch by the hand of a master-builder. It is the "Prospero" of the "Tempest" — the great magician who here, instructed by what his own "Ariel" denotes, builds this goodly arch of song, which has been in the past, and will be in the ages yet to come, the wonder of many of the most thoughtful among mankind. Let this for the present suffice. We shall conclude by asking a few questions. What means the unfinished Sonnet cxxvi.? Why is it unfinished? Why does Sonnet xcix. consist of fifteen lines? Is this accidental? What purpose is served by the irregular or abnormal sonnets that occur in the series? And what rational interpretation can any critic give of the 152d sonnet — more particularly of the words —

"I am perjur'd most;

For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee:

And all my honest faith in thee is lost?"

To whom or to what are these words addressed, and what key will unlock their meaning? For surely they were intended by Shakespeare to convey some definite, and possibly some very important and serious meaning. For no true or great poet will write in rhyme without regard to reason, but, while using figured speech, he will always write in conformity with such reason as he may be able afterwards to expound in prose. If Shakespeare did not so write, he must have been what Dante calls "a gross-witted person," who assumed too great a licence,—that is, who wrote without any rational purpose in what he wrote. "For it were great shame to any man, who, having rhymed on any theme under the garb of some figure or colour of rhetoric, should be unable, when required, to denude his language of that garb so as to unveil his real meaning."¹ Shakespeare was not so "gross-witted" as to write without a rational purpose in what he wrote. And "gross-witted" criticism will never unveil his meaning. Against all such criticism his Sonnets "reserve" their character. But there is a key that unlocks the meaning not only of the 152d sonnet, but also the meaning of every sentence in "Shakespeare's Sonnets," and in "A Lover's Complaint, by William Shakespeare."

¹ *Vita Nuova*, translated by Theodore Martin.

A GLIMPSE OF THE WEST.

THERE are few expressions more commonly used or more vague in meaning than "a good opening" and "getting on well," as applied by a great number of British parents to the prospects of their promising offspring. To a great many minds the imagined discovery of the first of these is regarded as the necessary prelude to the latter. How many instances are to be found in the New World of rich men, and even millionaires, who began life with nothing more to back them than brains and energy! Therefore it is conclusively proved that America must be the place for our superfluous youth; and what more can a parent or guardian do to ensure the future prosperity of their ward than to send him there? The boy, some eighteen or nineteen years old, has probably recently left some large school, where his success at cricket has been more noticeable than his progress in the sciences. He has not been specially prepared for any profession, and his elders foresee an enormous expense in the shape of tutors' fees, &c., before he can enter into any form of public life. Office work is distasteful, and idleness impossible. Such a picture is only too common in England at the present moment.

With matters at this juncture, an advertisement is found in some newspaper to the effect that most advantageous openings exist for gentlemen's sons in Western America; and which further goes on to state, that certain benevolent persons will receive young men into their homes and "teach them farming" for the slight consideration of from £100 to £150 per

annum. Here, then, is the long-sought "opening." What vague fancies are created in the minds of people, ignorant of country life, by the word farming! A vision floats before them of a picturesque old house enwrapped with sweet-smelling creepers; of cheerful rosy faces gathered round a festive board laden with every description of palatable fare which an unlimited supply of fresh milk, cream, butter, and eggs can produce; of quaint rooms, spacious hearths, and blazing logs.

This, in addition to vague ideas of good shooting, beautiful climate, and rolling prairies, forms a wonderful fool's paradise, in which it must be impossible for young hopeful to do anything else than "get on." Of course a year of such agricultural training will not only add greatly to his stock of knowledge, but will initiate him into the ways of the country, and by the end of that time he will be sure to pick up some good employment on one of the big farms, and with the advantage of his careful tuition will doubtless soon become overseer or manager of some property. A very pretty fiction, but very wide of the mark. So it is definitely settled that our ingenious youth is to be packed off. His ticket is bought, the day for his departure to an unknown land, 5000 miles away, has arrived, and grandmamma very appropriately gives him her blessing, and a copy of 'From Log Cabin to White House.'

Let us precede him and obtain a peep at this El Dorado. It is winter, and nothing but one huge white expanse meets the eye on every side. The sun, which has

been more or less obscure all day, makes a final effort to show itself before setting, and for some minutes its waning rays are reflected with lovely effect on the hard white snow. Looking round, there is nothing to break the monotony but one or two thickets of small young trees at long intervals. On approaching one of these "groves" (in the language of the country) we find the trees all very small—generally not more than ten feet high—and planted in rows at regular distances, covering not more than two or three acres on the average. They form, as a rule, two sides of a square, in order to give some amount of shelter on the north and west. Behind this is a small white wooden house, near which is a wooden stable and other buildings, and a yard enclosed by posts, boards, and "barbed" wire. In one corner of this, a rough, hay-roofed, tumble-down-looking shed affords shelter to some eight or nine head of stock; and a big heap of straw provides a warm bed to a large number of hogs, which literally bury themselves therein. On the south side of the stable various bits of machinery may be seen peeping out of the snow—such as the handles of a plough, the seat of a hay-rake, &c. Here and there are great banks of snow caused by the wind blowing between the buildings: these drifts are sometimes as deep as ten and fifteen feet. But what are those curiously regular mounds all round the foundations of the house? They are caused by stable-manure being heaped to the height of two and a half feet, and several feet in width, in order to keep the wind from penetrating under the house. This, when cov-

ered with snow, produces the effect of an artificial snow-drift. Everything outside bears evidence that the 20° below zero which has been the average temperature for the last month has not been without effect. From the windows, which are coated so thickly as to obscure any outlook, except in small patches specially cleared, down to the hard slippery rope for lowering buckets to the well, everything testifies to the intensity of the cold. Indoors the farmer and his sons, if old enough, are pulling on big "gum" (rubber) boots or "felt socks" (a sort of knee-boot made of thick list), wearing in addition to the latter a pair of "snow-shoes" (rather like our goloshes).¹ Thus equipped, they sally forth to do the evening "chaws"—or, in other words, to feed the live stock for the night, Indian corn forming the substance of their food. In the house the wife is preparing salt pork, fried potatoes, and pancakes, for supper. She is cooking at a large stove in a room about 15 feet by 12 feet. This, the principal room in the house, is a plain whitewashed apartment, which, besides the stove, has merely a cupboard, table, and a few chairs and shelves. Off this is a smaller room, used as a bedroom by the man and wife, and warmed by the connecting door being left open. So much for the ground floor. Above there is one attic room, whose sloping walls are partly formed by the roof. This is the children's bedroom. In one corner the stove-pipe is carried up from below, and the room is tolerably warm.

Storms known as "blizzards" occur now and again during the winter. They are the effect of a

¹ These are totally different from the Canadian and Indian snow-shoes, although known by the same name. We recently saw some in the window of a shop near Victoria Station, but these were erroneously described as warm winter moccasins.

very heavy fall of extremely fine snow, in conjunction with a terrific wind. The result can be easier imagined than described. Any prolonged absence from the house during one of these charming visitations is not only disagreeable in the extreme, with a biting wind penetrating to the very bones, and a blinding snow dashing over the face, but is even a jeopardy to life itself. In fact there are several authentic stories of persons perishing within a few yards of their house, overcome with cold and fatigue, and apparently in ignorance of their nearness to home.

Spring puts in appearance about the beginning of April, and with it the farmer commences active operations for the year. If he has a good strong son, of sixteen or upwards, he will require no regular hired help, with the exception of perhaps a man for a month, to assist in haymaking and harvesting. The father and son will each work a team of two horses,—and in that light soil two horses can plough, roughly speaking, two acres a-day. Thus, with a couple of ploughs working, and four acres being turned over every day, not much more than from two to three weeks is required to get over the sixty or seventy acres of “spring ploughing.” This is generally the land on which the Indian corn of the previous year has been grown. A similar-sized piece of wheat or other “small grain” stubble is ploughed immediately after harvest, and left covered in snow all winter. It is thus the farmer, whose holding, in nine cases out of ten, does not exceed 160 acres, divides his ploughed land. These portions, together with a little surplus land for pasture, make up the usual amount.

This, then, is the ideal farming. “What’s in a name?” A great deal, forsooth, and more than there

is frequently supposed to be. Had these advertisers spoken of peasant proprietors and peasant holdings, not one-tenth of the young fellows who either are at this moment or have been in the Western States, would ever have gone. And this description of farming is unquestionably no more than a system of peasant holdings.

The class of men working these farms corresponds merely to the English agricultural labourer living in his wayside cottage, and being paid so much a-week. Their farms are taken on an agreement that they must give up a considerable share of the crops in lieu of cash rent. They are an industrious, hard-working class, who make a fair living and a little money, but have little chance to become rich men. For in proportion as the working of a farm is easy, the profits are equally small. And in such a large country, with such a small population in proportion, the prices of all agricultural produce are low. The wages that these farmers receive is their share of the crop—which, after all, is only receiving money in a lump instead of in weekly instalments.

Under the “Homestead” and “Tree Claim” laws, a person can in an unoccupied district obtain 160 acres by living a stated number of years thereon, and in addition to this, another 160 acres by planting some 20 acres with trees. Thus, in well-settled-up parts there are instances of day-labourers from this country who, by having done this ten or twelve years ago, find themselves in possession of some 300 acres, worth perhaps £3 or £4 per acre. But these results are not so easily obtained. In the first place, the parts where these claims can be carried out are necessarily wild in the extreme, and an immense amount of hardship

must be undergone, and some capital expended, to convert 300 acres of undulating grass-land into a well-tilled farm, with house, buildings, and a 20-acre grove. Then if, after all, civilisation should not rapidly extend itself into the immediate neighbourhood, but little return can be expected; for, from the isolated position of such a place, markets are inaccessible, and the land of practically no value. So the gentle reader must not rush to the conclusion that he can easily obtain 300 acres, and immediately sell it and fill his pockets. Besides, there are, of course, certain qualifications requisite, such as becoming naturalised.

Doubtless any new country naturally affords a great field for capital and safe speculation. Towns and railways are being built, and land is consequently becoming every year more valuable. Therefore there are few countries which afford such scope to a young man with even a small capital. But for a lad brought up in England as (to use the expression of the many advertisements) a gentleman's son, there is no future unless he has some slight capital. He might, after his first year, obtain work on a farm from the beginning of April to the end of October at about 20 dollars (4 guineas) per month. For the remaining months of the year he might obtain his board alone on a farm, and in return would be expected to do the "chaws" during the winter weather.

Of course there are various articles of winter apparel, such as thick gloves, caps, snow-boots, &c., which have to be purchased. As these are always extremely expensive and badly made (seldom lasting more than a season), they would always mean a great inroad into his wages, the remainder of which

could not reasonably be expected to do more than cover incidental expenses for the year. Thus could body and soul be just kept together. This, with no ulterior prospect, is, after all, but a poor return for all the time spent at school, and the final outlay of £150 premium.

It is a common expression that a dollar in the States goes no further than a shilling in England. Now, although agricultural prices are very low, yet this remark is not far from the truth as regards nearly every species of manufactured commodity, or, in other words, nearly every requisite of an educated person.

The States are all portioned out by Government surveyors into portions of a mile square, known as "sections." Each section is, as a rule, divided into four farms, and it is thus that a sort of "regulation" size of 160 acres has become one of the features of the country,—at least, of that portion at present described—viz., northern and western Iowa, southern Minnesota, and the eastern portions of Dakota and Nebraska.

In these places the only legal roads are the "section lines;" therefore the roads cross at right angles, and at regular distances of one mile. The summer heat is not at all in proportion to the severity of the winter, although an occasional day of 90° in the shade may occur. Except along the riverbanks, the country is devoid of natural timber, and is on the whole flat, although there is enough undulation to make a pretty effect in a woody country. No wayside cottages or villages exist. There are small straggling towns, surrounded on all sides by from ten to twenty miles of country, under the occupation of the farmers already mentioned, and any attempt

at a larger scale of farming is quite the exception, whilst a stock "ranch" in its true meaning is unknown.

If the reader has ever been in a country where the climate compels him to stop indoors day after day, or at least only to go out for a short time well wrapped up in furs, he will have some idea of the dreadful monotony of a Western winter. A visit to town after a week of this is regarded by the farmer as a veritable oasis in the desert. His sleighs are got ready, and with plenty of loose hay in the bottom of the waggon he starts off, and may often think himself lucky if he reaches the town without one or two spills. Once arrived, he is so cold that a glass of something hot in the nearest saloon is practically indispensable. Having done his shopping, he is about to return, when a snowstorm comes on suddenly, and he knows he is let in for a night in town. Is it impossible to imagine the result in a neighbourhood of young, hot-headed Englishmen? Being utterly sick of the monotony of the snowed-up prairies, and glad to be once more in the congenial society of fellow-countrymen, they determine to make a night of it, and have a "real good time." The proceedings are not wholly unlike a breaking-up supper at school, or a farewell wine at the "varsity," only with this difference, that the gambling-table and the "cooler" take no part in those typical festivities. The "cooler" is the local "lock-up"—a kind of caged den into which young gentlemen playing football with an empty pickle-jar at 1 A.M. are liable to be placed. One young Englishman, who started farming some years ago, still forms a topic of conversation by having amused himself on one occasion by playing a num-

ber of games at billiards with the saloon-keeper for an equivalent number of bottles of champagne. He has since withdrawn from farming, and thinks the country "beastly," and impossible to "get on" in.

It is a commonly recognised fact that at our English universities a great deal goes on in the way of "spreeing," of which parents, in spite of their living in England at the self-same moment, are comparatively ignorant. Is it, then, so very astonishing that young men, when at the safe distance of five thousand miles from home, should break loose, as it were, and try to shake off the depressing monotony of their life, even when the only means for so doing consist in low dissipation? This same monotony causes some men to become hard drinkers; and if the death registers of that part of America were searched, several Englishmen's names would appear as dying of an unhappy disease, not unfrequently signified by two letters of the alphabet.

Further back the special facilities for speculation are spoken of, and may be illustrated by a case of a farm bought, at the instigation of a well-known firm of land-agents, for a fellow who was going through his premium year. By the end of that time two things had occurred. Firstly, the "pup" (contraction of the word pupil) did not fancy farming, and returned to England. Secondly, the land, which had cost only ten dollars per acre, realised exactly double that sum throughout. However, this result had not in any measure been produced by the agricultural training of the "pup," while the £150 spent on his premium was merely an unnecessary deduction from the profits of the land speculation.

The statement that there are no

villages may require a little explanation. There are many small towns consisting of only a score or so of wooden stores, &c.; but these, unlike an English village, which is a collection of the small dwellings of agricultural labourers, are merely a collection of stores, saloons, and grain "elevators" (warehouses), or, in other words, a place of business (not of residence) for the labouring classes. These little towns, again, form a field for safe speculation. A man may break his capital up into sums only large enough to buy one or two town lots in a great number of such places. Several of them are sure to increase in size most considerably, and the remainder being absolutely necessary to their surrounding neighbourhoods, will certainly not diminish: thus will the money so invested increase also.

The American farmers' *menu* forms a striking contrast to that of our beef-eating Englishmen. Butcher's meat is the last thing they think of buying, the great idea being that the farm should produce its own food. An abundance of flour is easily obtained from the wheat grown on the place, while eggs and cream and butter help to make up an almost vegetarian diet. Salt pork in small chunks is generally placed on the table, but this is looked on chiefly as a relish, except in winter, when eggs are scarce, and more pork consequently eaten. The one piece of extravagance is committed at threshing-time, when meat is usually provided for the extra hands then employed. As a striking proof of the expense of a meat diet, an American will tell you that at threshing-time it always costs him at least a dollar and a half a-day in butcher's meat in order to satisfy some dozen hungry men.

Our public school curriculum is doubtless very good: still, if one of its results is to be merely the production of so many additional peasants for the United States, some changes might surely be made with advantage. An "outdoor" class, equipped with spades and picks, might repair the neighbouring roads and ditches, or what not. This would surely be less inconsistent with the future requirements of a peasant than even a tolerable proficiency in the classics and mathematics; and must, at least, have the advantage of conducing more to muscular development.

It requires a subtle mind to discover why the flinging of manure is a more aristocratic pursuit than the papering of a room, or the selling of goods from behind a counter. Yet among the many people in this country who scout the idea of their sons being engaged in trade, none seem to regard the dirtiest manual work, when performed on an American "farm," as being in the least degree *infra dig*. This is all the more curious, as in the States the farming community is considered in every respect to be the lowest grade in the social scale. The small "store-keeper" (tradesman), his "clerks" (counter-jumpers), the saloon-keeper, and even the artisans of all kinds, whether paper-hangers, painters, or what not, are all looked upon by the community at large as occupying a much better position in the world than the farmer. Why? For this reason, that the business man in town requires not only a fair education, but also a fair amount of capital, before he can start his store; the artisan likewise requires education (*i. e.*, his apprenticeship), in order that he may become a skilled workman; whereas the farmer requires no literary or scientific education, as his work is merely unskilled labour,

and his capital is, as a rule, only nominal.

Of course the farmer must be a fairly intelligent man, but all his requisite education consists of the daily experience of a man brought up from childhood on one of these farms. No apprenticeship is needed in order to teach a man the correct method of feeding pigs. Therefore, without going farther into this question, we can surely understand that the work of these men is merely unskilled labour. As regards capital, an instance that recently occurred serves to give the reader an idea of the manner in which these people commence farming.

A farmer's son falls in love with and marries a farmer's daughter. The parents in each case are old people, who, by dint of a life of very hard work and carefulness, have at last become free from all mortgages, &c., and are happy and contented. Each of the newly married pair is given a horse as perhaps their life portion. The team thus obtained is immediately mortgaged, and some cattle and hogs purchased. A few farm implements are then bought "on time," the future crop being a security. Thus our young people start on perhaps not more than forty acres, the man doing everything outside, and his wife doing all indoor work. The first house is sometimes only a "dug out" half underground with mud-walls.

So not only does the farmer begin on nothing, but worse than nothing—mortgages and debt. Such is the class which English parents deem the appropriate one for their sons to join.

Many young Englishmen, fresh from school or university, and some even who have already tried the army as a profession, and come to a "smash up," go out to the States

with a capital in many cases of £2000 or £3000. Although almost ignorant of the ins and outs of country life, and so uninitiated into the mysteries of farming as to be unable to distinguish between a crop of growing oats or wheat, yet about 75 per cent of them rush headlong into farming. What is the natural result? Being in this new sphere of life as helpless as children, they have to pay through the nose for everything. In every bargain they are wofully beaten by the astute natives. Their ideas of life are so inconsistent with those of the Yankee farmer, that they consequently launch into all manner of expenses wholly incommensurate with the profits obtainable from their farms. They first improve and enlarge the house and the buildings, buy a large stock of new harness, implements, &c., and try to impart to their houses the ship-shape appearance of a prosperous English farm. One man wishing to have some rooms papered, and thinking that after buying the paper he would have little more expense, forms rather a striking instance. He now tells the story of how a couple of house-decorators came from town, and after papering his rooms, which took only two days, sent him a bill of 30 dollars.

This æsthetic young man, whose eye recoiled from whitewashed walls, will have to work very hard on his farm to obtain such a rate of remuneration. Two or three years of farming is generally enough to disgust these men with an occupation for which they are so radically unfit. The increase in the value of land sometimes compensates them for money sunk; but, as a rule, they consider themselves very lucky if they have not a considerable deficit as a sole result of their agricultural "opening."

Any American with the same

capital and education, even in his wildest flights of imagination would never entertain any idea of farming. He might doubtless buy land as a speculation, and if his land was "broken" ("breaking" is the first ploughing of prairie soil), he would have renters on it; but that is the limit to which his farming would extend. Juvenile Jonathan, unlike young John Bull, would be brought up with regular business habits and disposition. With any approach to the same capital, he would start a "store" in a small town: by attending to business he would own, after some years, the largest store in that town, and in time would possess a flourishing business in one of the largest towns in his State.

The only benefit obtained for a young Englishman who learns farming in America by the premium system, is the qualification to

perform ordinary unskilled agricultural labour at a remuneration of some seventy-five cents (three shillings) per day. Still, the occupation of such a person can be described by the mystic word *farming*, which may mean that he owns a farm, and sounds quite orthodox.

If, instead of becoming a day-labourer, he were qualified to be a mechanic, house-decorator, &c., his pay would be from two and a half to four dollars per day, or about five times as much as that of a farm hand. However, the name of an artisan's trade would always stick in the throat of English conventionalism. Comparison between the mutual prospects of these positions would be an insult to the readers' intelligence, so we must leave the problem to the solution of such of them as are parents and guardians.

MAGDA'S COW.—PART I.

CHAPTER I.—THE TWO REAPERS.

“ Es ist ein Schnitter der heisst Tod
 Hat Gewalt vom höchsten Gott
 Heut wetzt er das Messer
 Es schneid 't schon viel besser
 Bald wird er drein schneiden
 Wir müssen es leiden
 Hüte dich, schön 's Blümelein!
 Hüte dich !”

—*Old Church Chant.*

It was harvest-time, and the reapers were busy at work in the fields cutting and binding together into sheaves the golden corn-ears; carts drawn by oxen or horses were plying unceasingly to and fro, conveying the grain to the stackyard behind the great house.

Never before, since the oldest inhabitants of the village remembered, had the promise of the harvest been so rich, never had the corn-ears grown so equal and so straight, standing one near the other in close ranks like well-drilled soldiers. No gaps to be seen anywhere, no deserters from this army; for this year no untimely hailstorms had stepped in to beat down their forces, no vicious rains to foster canker and mildew: each single ear stood perfect and intact, ready to burst and let fall the treasure it contained in a golden rain.

Men and women, old and young, had turned out alike to hasten the garnering of the wheat; but there was no sound of mirth or gaiety heard in the fields. Silently and sullenly the reapers plied their work, only pausing now and then to sign themselves with the cross, as the renewed tolling of a bell reached their ears.

The harvest-time is for the Polish peasant girls what the Carnival season is for city damsels. Their smartest neckerchiefs, their brightest ribbons, are donned on

these occasions, with here and there an autumn marigold or aster stuck in the carefully braided plaits; and thus adorned, in hand the sickle which takes the place of a fan, the Polish lass issues forth arrayed for conquest.

The corn-field offers many opportunities for rural flirtations: the rustic swain can often melt a fair one's heart by sharing her task; a draught of fresh water offered to parched lips earns grateful smiles; and while bending together over an obstreperous sheaf which cannot be fastened without assistance, many a bond for life is tied as well.

In autumn, when the garnerers are full, and the work is over, it is no imprudence to take a wife, least of all on such a year as this when there is bread in plenty to spare; and thus it comes that the autumn time is a harvest-time as well for the village priest, who has plenty to do in forging the links which are to bind together for better or worse many more or less loving couples.

Yes, there would be bread in plenty this year, there was no doubt at all about that. But of what use is bread if you are not sure to be there to eat it? Viewed from the churchyard, overflowing garnerers seem wonderfully uninteresting; and loaves of bread, even the largest and the whitest, wake little appetite among the dead.

For another reaper was at work in this goodly harvest season, and the name of this reaper was Death.

That foul spectre called cholera had been creeping about the country, making havoc in castle and cottage, till it had reached the village of Rudniki; and once arrived here, it was in no hurry to leave the place, for this village and its surroundings seemed to please this foul spectre exceedingly well. It settled itself down here in quite a leisurely fashion, and made itself entirely at home in this village; for Rudniki was a large and well-populated village, and there was plenty of work to be done here—a goodly harvest to be reaped of swarthy men and comely women, of curly-haired children and smiling babes.

Every day the bell tolled for some new victim; strong men were stricken down in the midst of their work; mothers saw their little ones torn from their very arms: there was weeping and desolation everywhere.

A proclamation had lately been issued ordering that each corpse should be removed from the dwelling-house within a few hours of the decease, and this under pain of heavy fine. To comply with this injunction, a temporary shed had been erected on a piece of waste land outside the village, and hither the dead were carried to await their burial. As this extempore dead-house stood alone, adjoining the corn-fields, it was in full sight of the working peasants, and the tolling bell which ushered in every fresh arrival grated harshly on their ears. Small wonder then if among the reapers there was no merriment and no singing, no joyous harvest-songs to be heard this year, no tender dramas played among the sheltering corn-sheaves.

The lady of the great house,

Madame Wolska, who owned the village and all the land about there, had ordered that the wages of the cutters should be raised five *kreuzers* a-head, besides directing that a glassful of spirits should be served out to each one twice during the day's work; but even this did not avail to dispel the general gloom.

It was with a gloomy brow that old Michael, the overseer, counted over the ricks by cutting notch after notch on a hazel twig, the usual fashion of reckoning in those parts; even young Danelo, the wildest as well as the handsomest lad in the village, subdued by the general melancholy, never approached the girls or attempted a jest; he seemed even to have forgotten how to whistle.

Whence had sprung up this foul spectre, which had turned all their songs to weeping, all their joy to woe? Wise people shook their heads, and doctors talked of marsh effluvia and miasma from the lake, partly dried up from the excess of the heat; but the peasants knew better, and said that the Almighty God had sent it as a punishment to the inhabitants, who had tasted of the fruits of the field before they had been blest in church. Several could attest to having seen the godless young Danelo with his pockets full of green apples long before the Feast of the Assumption, after which day only, as every orthodox Christian knows, it is allowable to taste of apples and pears.

Up there on the verandah of the great house sat Madame Wolska herself, reclining in an easy-chair, with a book in her hand, and her work-basket beside her. She was reading, but occasionally casting a glance at the scene below.

The house, a large and roomy one-storeyed building, constructed

in the style of most Polish country-houses, stood on a slightly rising ground half-way between the village below and the beech-forest above.

Despite the stifling heat of the August afternoon, Madame Wolska was attired in heavy robes of some black woollen stuff. She was both young and handsome, her skin of a milky whiteness, her hair of a glossy brown, her eyes blue and placid, the mouth calm and self-reliant, the figure full and round,—these were the charms which four years previously had kindled the passion of Stefan Wolski, a man of no particular family, but who late in life had achieved a gigantic fortune by the opportune discovery of some naphtha-springs. Sophie Bienkowska had been a penniless orphan, and from seventeen to twenty-two she had toiled as a governess, eating the bread of servitude, which to her was sometimes very bitter; so that when the rich Wolski had asked her to share his wealth, she had accepted him unhesitatingly, without caring to ask any superfluous questions of her heart. Stefan Wolski had been a vulgar and purse-proud man, whose passage to women's hearts must infallibly have been barred by his large red nose, had he not possessed a golden key, which opens this like other doors; and though her accession to fortune was envied by many, Sophie did not find her lot as his wife to be altogether a bed of roses. The position of sick-nurse and general *souffre-douleur* to a querulous and disagreeable old man is hardly to be taxed higher than that of a paid governess. However, luckily for her, this second martyrdom was but of short duration. Her naturally sweet temper and a certain stolidity of nature helped her to endure her fate during something more than three

years, and then she reaped the benefit of her prudence and patience, for the obnoxious Wolski died; and, more to spite some distant relations than out of any particular attachment for Sophie, he left the whole of his very considerable fortune at her unlimited disposal. Thus it came about that the former penniless orphan, hard-worked governess, and tormented wife, found herself at twenty-six an unfettered widow and the richest proprietress in the neighbourhood.

That was why this stifling August afternoon still found Sophie Wolska uncompromisingly attired in heavy mourning robes of crape and cashmere.

It was now more than a year since the unprepossessing Wolski had been laid to rest, therefore the young widow might well have allowed herself some slight modification of her weeds. A year is a very long time to mourn for a disagreeable man, avaricious and querulous, and old enough to have been one's grandfather. But a year is a very short time indeed to honour the donor of those broad lands and heavy money-bags; more than a year must be due to the memory of the magician who had transformed the penniless girl into the richest woman in the country.

And so thought Sophie Wolska, who had always had a great regard for the proprieties of life, as well as an endless fund of waiting patience. Not one whit would she lighten her mourning,—not one visit would she receive until the correct time since her bereavement was elapsed. Suitors in plenty would fain have come buzzing about the place; but none of them had as much as been admitted to her presence. Even now, when the raging cholera in the neighbourhood would have furnished the most reasonable excuse for a jour-

ney of pleasure or a trip to a watering-place, she had had no thought of leaving Rudniki. Madame Wolska relied implicitly on her excellent constitution and her rational mode of life for keeping off this illness, which she did not fear. Besides, she had no wish to show herself in public until she had doffed her weeds, and earned the right to enjoyment. Afterwards she would have plenty of time to amuse herself and see the world, and possibly make another marriage more to her liking. She was in no hurry, and never acted on impulse—the sort of woman who rarely makes a mistake in life. For the present time the mere consciousness of possession was still enough for her,—it was sufficient enjoyment to sit on her verandah, gazing on the landscape around her, as she was now doing at that moment, and to be able to repeat to herself, “That is my village; those are my woods, my fields, my peasants.”

And just at that moment she was informed that one of her peasants was waiting outside and wished to speak to her.

This message was delivered by a tall handsome girl, with coal-black eyes and heavy plaits of dark hair, who, though but a peasant herself, as her bare feet and coloured apron testified, had been lately promoted to the post of special handmaiden (I cannot say lady's-maid) to Madame Wolska. The staff of servants had not been properly reorganised since old Wolski's death; and the footman had left at the first alarm of cholera. Madame Wolska required but little personal attendance, and had never had a lady's-maid in her life. She liked this girl, and was content with her services for the present.

“Who is it, Magda?”

“It is Master Filip and his

wife,” answered Magda, deferentially; for Filip was well known to be the best and wisest man in the village; and though only a peasant like herself, it seemed more natural to Magda to call him Master Filip than by his name alone.

“Very well, show them in here;” and a minute later the couple were ushered on to the verandah.

Filip Buska might have been called a good-looking man, had not an expression of uncompromising severity, almost amounting to hardness, marked his features. Tall and muscular, he appeared a little over forty, though in reality he had not yet reached that age. His hair was dark, his eyebrows thick and bushy; his sunburnt face, strongly marked by lines of care, had a weather-beaten look. His coarse linen shirt-sleeves, rolled up above the elbow, showed well-browned arms, and he held a saw in his hand.

Very hard-working and self-reliant, Filip Buska was justly considered the first man in the village. No one had ever seen him go near the public-house, nor as much as treat himself to a pipe of tobacco. For him life was all work and no play. From a ragged goatherd he had raised himself to his present comparatively comfortable position, possessing his two horses, his cart in summer, and sledge in winter; his pig, his fowls, and his bee-hives. His hut was the best thatched hut, and his garden the best kept garden in the village.

Though scrupulously honest, he had a keen eye for business, and no one knew better how to drive a close bargain; not even a Jew was ever able to boast that he had got the better of Filip Buska. Being handy and inventive, he was ever on the alert to increase his savings by turning his hand to odd jobs of all kinds, according to

the necessities that sprang up in the place. He repaired the neighbours' carts and ploughshares, could mend a window or a pair of boots, and had lately invented a totally new sort of wooden bolt for securing barns and lofts.

When the cholera had appeared at Rudniki he had promptly stepped in as an extempore coffin-maker, and had been driving a brisk and remunerative trade in that line for the last several weeks. Hitherto the inhabitants of Rudniki had fetched their coffins from the nearest town, several hours off, so the necessity of a coffin-maker had not been felt; and the coffins at Brodek were more elegantly fashioned than those which Filip turned out. But now, in this season of Death, no one was inclined to be fastidious about the precise shade or shape of their coffin, and speed was the most important consideration; besides, every horse in the place was taken up bringing in the harvest, and no one had a cart to spare to send to the town.

Filip Buska's wife was a plain-faced woman, some years younger than himself. He had married her only about ten years previously, having, contrary to the habit of the country, waited until he should have secured a comfortable independence before burdening himself with a family. He had chosen his wife solely for her industrious and hard-working qualities, though she had brought him no portion; having justly calculated that a woman who is able and willing to work is a better bargain in the end than a light-headed girl, who would, in a couple of years, waste more than she had brought to her husband's house.

Their union was a model one, and often held up by the village priest as an example to the other villagers. They had had several children, but most of them had

died young, and at the time this story opens, they had but two remaining, a boy and a girl, who were twins, and three years old.

After the couple had duly saluted the lady, according to peasant etiquette, by pressing deferential kisses upon her shoulder and elbows, the husband began—

"It is about some wood, noble Pani, that I have made bold to come up here. Three new coffins have been ordered for to-morrow afternoon, and I can procure no more boards in the village to finish them. I have just come back from the saw-mill down the valley, but they cannot let me have the planks till the next day; and the Jew asks an impertinent price for them besides," he muttered in a lower tone.

"I would gladly help you, but I do not know whether we have any boards to spare," answered Sophie, gently. "You know the wood will not be brought from the forest till next month, when the harvest is over. I think there are a few old boards lying in the stackyard; you are welcome to take those."

"Thank you, gracious lady," said Filip, without any particular gratitude in his voice, for he had already marked those boards, as he came in, and measured them with his eye in passing—"thank you; those boards you speak of would just about suffice for the coffins without the lids, but I do not know where to take the covers from. I must have them ready by noon to-morrow, and one is for a full-grown man too."

"I am afraid I can think of nothing else," began Madame Wolska, regretfully; while Filip, through the open glass doors, was eyeing the various articles of furniture, dimly seen in the drawing-room within, as though speculating

on the possibility of turning a mahogany table into a coffin, or laying a dead man to rest within a grand pianoforte.

"If you please, gracious Pani," now put in Magda, who had remained standing on the verandah steps, "there are several large packing-cases in the store-room. The one which held last year's apples is nearly empty, perhaps it might do."

Filip Buska now turned for the first time and looked at Magda. It was not his habit to look at women unless there happened to be any particular reason for so doing; and as he now looked at Magda, it was not to take notice of her brilliant eyes and glowing colour, but merely to say to himself, "That is an intelligent lass to have thought of the packing-case with the apples."

"Yes, to be sure! The packing-cases in the store-room," said Madame Wolska, in a tone of relief. "Tell the housekeeper—but no, I will go myself;" and she rose from her seat.

Sophie Wolska had not yet acquired the fine-lady habit of gracefully doing nothing. She had been accustomed to work all her life, and could not so quickly get out of the groove. Passing through the large and rather inadequately furnished drawing-room, whose bare white walls were adorned only by two gilt-framed mirrors, and one staring portrait of a sour-faced old man in a black coat and gold watch-chain, she took a heavy bunch of keys from the writing-table, and proceeded to the store-room, followed by Magda and the peasant couple.

It was a large and roomy store-room, in which Sophie Wolska took a special pride, and delighted in visiting every day. Well-cured hams and tongues were sus-

pended from the rafters above; barrels of flour, rice, and other grains stood ready for use; glass jars, containing tempting-looking home-made jams and *compotes*, stood ranged in neat rows upon the wooden shelves, each glass neatly ticketed and inscribed in Madame Wolska's own handwriting—that elegant handwriting which but a few years ago she had so wearily struggled to impart to dull-headed and clumsy-fingered pupils.

Huge canisters of tea, coffee, and sugar stood on the tables; parcels of dates, almonds, raisins, and many other dainties were hidden away in the drawers of the presses. The open windows, admitting a free current of air, were carefully guarded from intruding insects by a close wire netting, against which myriads of flies beat and bruised themselves in helpless fury at not being able to reach those delicacies thus tantalisingly displayed before their eyes. The angry hum of the baffled insects revibrated throughout the room.

"There are two cases," said Madame Wolska, pointing to one containing cooking apples, and another dried peas. "You can have whichever suits you best."

"Thank you, noble lady," said Filip, and he knelt down briskly on the sanded brick floor, and took out his foot-rule. His wife stood leaning against a flour-barrel, and watched him with weary eyes.

After a hasty measurement, and a short mental calculation, Filip decided in favour of the apples. "If your worship would kindly direct the case to be emptied, the wife will come and fetch it in the morning. To-day we can only carry the boards from the stack-yard, and I shall be busy with my work all the forenoon."

"Very well," said Madame

Wolska, and then they took their leave, Sophie remarking at parting, "What ails your wife, Filip?" for she was looking pale, and had not spoken a word the whole time.

"Only the heat, gracious lady," said Filip—"only the heat, and maybe she is a bit tired with the work, for she is a rare good one for helping me; she is of more use to me than two lads, and as strong as a man almost."

Sophie Wolska returned to the verandah after the peasants had left her, and finished the chapter of the novel she had been reading; then when it became too dark to read, she took up her knitting and worked away till the lights were brought and tea was ready, letting her thoughts travel backwards and forwards over many things the while. She passed over her wardrobe in mental review, and decided that she would require nothing new till next spring. "My old black cashmere *futro* (fur cloak)

will do quite well for here in the country," she said. "Only new lining for the pockets and collar will be necessary." Then she reckoned up how many pots of jam she would still require to make. "It would be wiser to preserve all the melons," she thought, "and not eat any of them fresh this year; they were apt to disagree in time of cholera." Then taking a range into the more remote future, she speculated a little, upon what sort of dresses she would have next year, and what sort of husband she would have some day. The little episode about the coffins had not left any particularly depressing impression upon her mind. She was not a nervous woman, and did not feel shocked at being thus rudely brought face to face with the vulgar and prosaic machinery of death and burial, as by rights a fine lady should be. Of course if people died they had to be buried, and coffins had to be procured somehow.

CHAPTER II.—THE SECOND PACKING-CASE.

"I know when one is dead and when one lives:
She's dead as earth."

—*King Lear.*

Next morning early, as Magda was standing in the verandah dusting the benches and preparing the breakfast-table, she looked down the road that led to the village and saw a figure coming slowly up the hill.

The day promised again to be a glorious harvest-day, one of the days wanted to put the crown to the summer's work. The little lake was unruffled by any breeze, but still sent forth a slight mist, which the sun was gradually dispersing, but as yet enveloped part of the landscape as with a hazy veil. Therefore Magda did not at

once distinguish the approaching figure. Presently, as it came nearer, she recognised it to be Filip Buska. This surprised her slightly, for surely it had been settled the previous evening that his wife was to come for the apple-case.

"Good morrow to you. So you have come yourself?" she said interrogatively, as he reached the house, noting as an unusual circumstance, that although the air was still fresh and pleasant, and he was a strong and healthy man, yet the heavy drops of perspiration were standing on his brow.

"Yes; I have come myself," he answered gloomily, not responding to her morning salutation, and wiping his forehead with his sleeve.

"The case is empty; I have just emptied it. Will you come and take it?"

"I wish to see the gracious lady for a moment," answered Filip.

On the part of any one else it would have been an unheard-of presumption to request to see the lady of the house at so unseasonable an hour; but Filip was an exceptional and privileged person, and had, moreover, a certain in-born authority in his manner, which rarely failed to enforce obedience to his wishes, so that when he said to Magda, "I wish to speak to your mistress," she answered—

"I shall go and see whether she is awake; perhaps you will sit down and rest on this bench meanwhile."

Without thanking her, he sat down, and Magda, cautiously opening the door of Madame Wolska's bedroom, saw that her mistress was already attired in dressing-gown, and sitting before her mirror.

"Yes—the gracious Pani would see him presently; he was to wait here," Magda brought word a few minutes later.

Filip received the message with an apathetic stare, and then seemed to forget her presence.

Magda was a lively girl, and always inclined for conversation, but she felt uncomfortably awed in presence of this severe-looking man, and did not venture to ask him, as she would much have liked to do, whether there was nothing new in the village below, and whether it were true that old Katinka, the priest's housekeeper, had been taken ill with the cholera.

A little later Madame Wolska appeared on the verandah, looking

serenely handsome in her loose dressing-gown, refreshed by her night's slumber, and with a healthy appetite for her breakfast.

"You have come for the packing-case," she said after a moment, seeing that he did not speak.

"I came," he said, clearing his throat, and speaking as though with difficulty—"I came to ask the gracious lady whether she would let me have the other case as well? The other one—the one with the peas. I should require both cases—the one with the apples and the one with the peas."

He repeated all this in a dull mechanical manner, speaking slowly and distinctly, like a lesson learnt by rote.

"If you really require it," said Madame Wolska somewhat reluctantly, beginning to consider whether she could without much inconvenience put the dried peas into a sack; but Magda, who was quicker of thought, put in—

"Surely not another coffin? Has old Katinka——?" But Filip Buska's face looked so very irresponsible that she did not finish her question.

"Perhaps I can spare the other case," said Madame Wolska, after a pause. "But why have you not brought your wife with you? You will not be able to carry both cases alone."

"My wife is dead," said Filip, gloomily. "It is for her that I require the other case."

"Jesu Maria!" shrieked Magda.

"Dead!" said Madame Wolska. "Can it be true? How? When did she die?"

"Last night," said Filip. "After we had left the great house, she cooked the supper before we lay down to rest. We ate boiled potatoes and bacon, and I never noticed that she hardly touched her plateful, for I was busy working

out the measurements of the coffins to be made to-day. Only this morning I saw that her plate was still full. I slept heavily, for I was tired; but about two o'clock I was awakened by the groans from her bed. My poor Julka! I should hardly have known her face,—all blue and drawn on one side with the pain. I fetched the old midwife, who is known to be learned in such matters: she gave her warm drinks of the blest herbs, and hot cloths with roasted corn were laid on her body; but it was all of no use. She passed away before sunrise. My poor Julka!"—and two heavy tears rolled down his hard furrowed cheeks.

"Why did you not send for me?" cried Sophie Wolska, who felt remorseful on thinking of her own calm undisturbed night. "Perhaps I might have helped you."

"It was God's will," said Filip moodily, relapsing into reserve; and as though to ward off any further expression of sympathy, he added hastily,—“Now, if the gracious Pani will permit, I will fetch the two packing-cases.”

"Certainly, certainly," said Madame Wolska, feeling ashamed of her utter helplessness in this matter. "Magda shall help you to carry them home, and I shall give you a packet of tea and some camphor-drops, in case you feel ill yourself or the children."

Filip accepted the tea and the camphor passively, or rather he made no resistance, when they were pressed upon him by mistress and maid. Together with Magda he repaired to the store-room, and there they proceeded to empty out the dried peas. Magda, kneeling on the floor, held open the mouth of the sack with both hands, while Filip, with a large wooden bowl, ladled the contents into it. When it was two-thirds empty, he hoisted

up the now lightened case on his arm, and poured the remaining peas in a rustling cascade into the coarse linen sack. But his hand was shaking like that of a drunkard, and many of them were spilt over the brick floor, and others sprang up rudely against Magda's face and hit her sharply like tiny bullets, till her skin tingled with the pain; but she uttered no sound of complaint, and Filip no word of apology. He had not even looked at her.

The smaller of the two cases was now placed within the other, and Filip and Magda together proceeded to carry them down the hill. It was a tolerable load even for two persons, and they were forced to rest more than once on the way; but no word was spoken between them, and they reached the hut in silence.

Filip's hut was conspicuous for neatness, and stood out from the other cottages like a new penny among a handful of old coppers. Its walls were only of mud, like the walls of other huts; but they were dazzlingly white: the wooden paling was carefully planned so as to keep out truant swine or fowls from making havoc in the well-kept garden, where cabbages and carrots, radishes and lettuce, flourished alongside of brilliant poppy-flowers, lilac, red, and pink, now rapidly beginning to let fall their petals. Three or four bee-hives, constructed out of hollowed-out tree-trunks, stood against the cottage wall at one end. As Magda entered the wicket-gate of the little garden, she became aware of a disagreeable smell which filled the air, and made her feel sick and faint. Filip perceived it too, and hastened his steps.

"It is that cursed paint which I left boiling on the fire. I suppose it has run over. I forgot

that there was no one left to look after it now!"

This was the colour which Filip was in the habit of preparing for painting over the coffins—a dull unvarnished black, prepared chiefly out of ox-gall and tar, after a cheap and simple recipe of his own. Magda understood now why this smell had made her feel so faint.

They put down the cases in the garden outside, and entered the hut.

The pot had indeed boiled over, and discharged its contents in a sable stream all over the stamped-clay floor of the kitchen. The bed where poor Julka had breathed her last was empty.

"They have taken her away already! My poor Julka!" said Filip.

At this moment Kuba, the boy-twin, came running in from the garden, roaring lustily: a bee had stung him on the arm. His sister meanwhile, squatting on the floor near the running stream of black paint, was seeking to analyse its nature and consistency by dipping each of her ten fingers in succession into the sable liquid, and after tasting and finding it unpalatable, therewith describing bold lines and figures all over her dirty rosy face and dimpled bare legs.

Everything inside the cottage bore already the mark of neglect and desolation. It was little more than three hours since the hard-working wife and mother had breathed her last, and already her absence was so tangibly, so cruelly felt. The milk-pots of black earthenware, which should every morning be freshly rinsed out, and put to dry in the sun, were standing about unwashed on the shelves, the milk within them already turning sour, and attracting numerous swarms of flies. A dish of cold potatoes was standing in the window.

"My poor Julka!" cried Filip again, and he sank down on his knees near the empty bed; great sobs shook his breast, and heavy tears rolled down his hard face.

Magda stood by, not daring to speak or make any effort at consolation. This grief was not of the kind which invites or even admits of sympathy.

Little Kasza, startled at the sound, raised her dark curly head, and stayed thus immovable, arrested in the midst of her painting operations, one grimy hand poised in the air, while the thick black liquid dropped slowly back on to the kitchen floor.

Even the boy Kuba hushed his roaring for a moment to gaze at the unwonted spectacle of his father crying. It must have been a very big bee indeed, he dimly thought, which had stung his Tata, to make him cry so loud.

After Filip had given vent to his grief for some minutes, he raised his head and stood up again: his face still quivered with the inward emotion, but not for long.

"For eleven years," he said, speaking more to himself than to Magda—"for eleven years we have lived happily together, I and my Julka; never a hard word passed between us; never for a moment had I cause to regret the day which made her my wife. She was worth her weight in gold. And to think," he continued, looking round the untidy kitchen—"to think that last night she was still here!"—then as his eye rested on a heap of potato-peelings near the threshold—"last night she cooked our supper, she peeled those potatoes; who will peel the potatoes this evening?"—and again there was a break in his voice.

"I will," said Magda quickly, finding her speech at last. "If the gracious Pani can spare me for

an hour this evening, I shall come down and make your supper."

Filip's plaintive allusion to the potatoes had been rather an expression of grief for the dead Julka than a direct interrogation as to how he was to get his supper that evening. At least, if any such prosaic feeling as anxiety about his food were mixed up with his sorrow for his lost wife, he was certainly unconscious of it; yet when Magda said, "I shall cook your potatoes this evening," he felt grateful to her, and, unknown to himself, somewhat relieved in his mind.

He had regained his self-control

by this time, and watched her calmly as she busied herself in the cottage putting many things to rights, sweeping the potato-peelings out into the yard, washing out the milk-pots, and putting them to dry on the paling-staves, where they shone in the sun like gigantic blackberries. She calmed the roaring Kuba, and coaxed him back into good-humour; she washed the dirty face and limbs of the little Kasza: and when, an hour later, she left the hut to return to the big house, some slight degree of order and comfort had been restored to the widower's desolate hearth.

CHAPTER III.—WIDOWER AND BRIDEGROOM.

"The lopped tree in time may grow again";
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower."

—SOUTHWELL.

Julka had expired on the Tuesday morning, and had that same day been laid in her grave, not in the usual churchyard, which was round the village church, but in the new cholera cemetery, which had lately been established on the hill at the edge of the forest. Several tall clumps of bracken fern had had to be removed to make room for poor Julka, and on the freshly upturned clods of earth the trees overhead were beginning to let fall the ripe beech-nuts.

It was on the following Sunday afternoon that Filip Buska again went up to the great house.

The harvest had all been safely got under cover during the week, and a thunderstorm the evening before had somewhat relieved the air. Within the last few days no new cases of cholera had sprung up: apparently the fiend, at length satisfied, had departed for some other neighbourhood. Julka had been the last victim it had snatched at parting.

It requires a very delicate sense of tact, and a most subtle knowledge of human nature, to guide us in our intercourse with a newly made widower or widow. If we weep with the mourner (as we are often advised to do); if we agree with him in calling his loss irreparable, incurable; if we confirm his heart-broken assertions that for him henceforward there can be no more peace or happiness in this world, and that he has nothing further to do on earth in future, but yearn for his grave during the lonely years which it may be his miserable lot to languish yet here below,—if, as I say, we endorse all this, then we do not send away the bereaved one any lighter of heart than he came to us. If, on the other hand, the comforter be gifted with some slight knowledge of human nature, and knows by experience that for every grief there is a remedy, and that the healing of every wound is only a question of time, yet the expression of such knowledge in

the sufferer's presence would be hardly seemly.

The clear-sighted comforter knows well that the healing theory holds good not only for wounds of the flesh but for those of the heart likewise. It only depends upon the severity of the cut, and the width and depth of the gash. Three or four years will close most wounds, leaving scarcely a scar behind. Those which require a longer cure are exceptionally severe cases; and it is rare, very rare indeed, to find a patient who lets his wound fester and bleed from within, and feed upon its own pain and bitterness, and never find relief until he is indeed in the grave. This sort of grief is rare, and perhaps unnatural and unwholesome; so it may be as well that we do not often come across it, and that it is only with the common and natural forms of grief that we are called upon to deal. The task is sufficiently difficult as it is; for even if we know well that for the despairing mourner before us there are plenty joyous days in store in the future, yet what philosopher would be cruel enough to say to a sobbing widow with cynical distinctness,—“You are weeping your eyes out to-day and tearing your hair for the sake of the husband you have lost, but before the grain has ripened three times more, you will be smiling by the side of a new spouse; therefore dim not your eyes with these useless tears, and keep your hair glossy and luxuriant for the flowers that are to adorn it by-and-by”?

Such a speech would be as brutal as it would be useless, for the patient would not believe you. He can see no gleam of light through the dense black veil which obscures his vision, and it would not be fitting were he able to catch a glimpse of such light as yet.

The comforter's words must therefore be directed and regulated by the comprehension of all these things; he must seek to tone down the edges of coal-black despair by sober neutral grey and brown tints, which, however, must betray no outward resemblance to the livelier hues of rose-colour and azure blue, towards which they are covertly paving the way. What comfort is given must be administered homœopathically in minute doses, like a sort of reversed sugar-pill; for in this case the sweetness is concealed within, and only the rind is bitter, so that the sufferer will go away feeling unaccountably lighter of heart, but unaware that he has received the first dose of that mighty elixir called hope.

Madame Wolska had been trying to frame her words in accordance with some such principles, and she had found her task a very difficult one. Filip's countenance, at all times stern, was hardened rather than softened by the expression of melancholy which now marked it, and she felt helpless to lighten his grief as yet,—the blow was too recent, the wound too fresh, to admit of palliatives. After dwelling at length on the virtues of the defunct Julka, Madame Wolska had endeavoured, apparently unsuccessfully, to awaken the widower's interest in the pair of children that remained to him. She had promised him new winter clothes for the little orphans, and had given him cakes to take home to them.

These favours had been received apathetically, with scanty thanks; evidently the widower was as yet too much crushed to be touched by compassion or kindness.

Sophie Wolska had now exhausted all her resources in the way of condolence, and was desirous of terminating the interview.

Seeing that Filip showed as yet no sign of departing, she rose from her seat, and said—

"You have nothing more to say, have you?"

"Yes, gracious Pani, I have something to say; it was for that that I came up here."

"Very well," said Sophie, standing still, and with no inclination to sit down again—"very well. What is it?"

"Gracious Pani," said Filip, speaking in a slow measured voice, "I came up here to look for a wife."

"A wife!" repeated Sophie, after a pause of stupefied surprise. "What do you mean?"

"I came up here to look for a wife," said Filip again, very distinctly.

Madame Wolska now gazed on Filip with compassionate solicitude, slightly tinged by alarm. Evidently the poor man had gone mad! The blow of losing an adored wife had been too much for him. He was mad, and she was alone with him! What would his next words be? Was he going to summon her with violence to restore to him his lost Julka? Some such association of ideas might well have been hovering in his distorted brain, since it was here that poor Julka had come on that last evening of her life.

Madame Wolska moved cautiously nearer to the door, though she could as yet detect no lurking symptoms of violence about the man, and with her fingers on the handle, she said in a gentle soothing tone, such as one uses towards an unreasonable feverish child—"You forget that your poor wife is dead. She is in heaven; she is praying up there for you and for your children."

"Julka is dead," said Filip, looking at Madame Wolska with

some surprise, for he could not divine her train of thought. "I have just come from her grave, where I have been putting up a wooden cross, and it is because she is dead that I am seeking for another wife in her place."

This time there was no mistaking his words, and fear rapidly giving way to stupefaction, the lady sank down on a chair, while Filip further elucidated his meaning.

"It is not yet a week since you lost your wife!" Sophie stammered at last, feeling shocked and scandalised beyond measure.

"Just so—a week on Tuesday," said Filip, calmly. "I would have come up sooner to speak to the noble Pani about this, but I had not time before to-day."

"But surely you cannot have forgotten your poor wife yet?"

"I shall never forget Julka, even if I live to be as old as old Josepha in the village," said Filip, quietly; "but we poor people cannot afford to spend over-long time in mourning. I have two little children at home, and no one to mind them. The neighbours are kind enough to lend a hand occasionally, but every one has her own affairs to look to, and I do not care to ask favours of any one. Little Kasza scalded her legs with the boiling water only yesterday, and Kuba is always at the bee-hives. I must have a wife of my own to mind the house."

Madame Wolska now comprehended the situation, though she could not as yet familiarise herself with it. She was experiencing a strong feeling of repulsion for this new-made widower, who was already clamouring for another spouse. Intensely methodical, nay, almost pedantic in all her mode of life, she had always hitherto taken

for granted that the course of grief was a thing to be determined by exact mathematical rules. A certain number of yards of black stuff had to be worn out in the deceased one's memory,—a certain number of handkerchiefs (supposed to be soaked with tears) sent to the wash,—above all, a certain number of moons allowed to elapse, before the surviving partner could be allowed to quit the shade of willows and cypresses, and begin to take notice of flowers that grow in the sunshine.

Only last week she had had her susceptibilities rudely shocked, when, on opening a bandbox sent from her dressmaker in town, she had perceived with horror that the frivolous priestess of fashion had taken the liberty to replace the dead black crape ruffles she was wont to wear by some unseemly frillings of snowy lace. That frill she had felt to be positively indelicate, and had insisted on its instantaneous removal. She was therefore unable to put herself so quickly in another's place, and understand that there are many things which poor people cannot afford beyond silk dresses and dainty fare, and that mourning for a beloved wife may under circumstances become an unreasonable luxury.

It was therefore rather coldly that she said to Filip—

"Then what do you want from me?"

"Only this, gracious Pani," said Filip, rubbing his head as though he were trying to rub his meaning out of it; "there is no girl down in the village that would do for me. Most of them have got a sweetheart already, so I bethought myself of that *dziewczyna* (lass) up here—Magda I think they call her; she seems an active and a healthy girl; and she has a cow of her own, they tell me. She has no

one courting her either, and she cooked the supper in a very handy fashion the other evening."

No one ever came in contact with Filip without being influenced by him; and by degrees his calm sensible tone and matter-of-fact way of explaining the case had its effect on Madame Wolska, who relaxed so far as to promise to speak to Magda that very evening on the subject.

"She is a good girl, and I shall be sorry to lose her," she said. "But if, as you say, you must have a wife at once, I do not think you could easily find a better one. She is active and honest, a good girl, and a handsome one."

"A good girl, and a handsome one," summed up Filip, as though he took these qualities on trust on Madame Wolska's word, not having verified either point for himself. "A good girl and handsome, you say, and she has a cow."

This renewed allusion to the cow was most indelicate, Madame Wolska felt. If poor Julka's place were to be filled so soon, at least it was not fitting that such a vulgar animal as a cow should have any influence in determining her successor. She therefore endeavoured to relegate the obnoxious quadruped into its proper place in the background, by expatiating again at greater length on the personal qualities of the bride-elect.

"Magda is very young and warm-hearted," she explained to Filip, "she is generous and impulsive, and will attach herself strongly to your children, I am sure. She will be easily led, if you are only kind. You could not have chosen a better wife."

Filip listened with a slightly contemptuous smile.

"None of the young girls nowadays are worth much," he remarked, as though he would say,

"There's small choice in rotten apples,"—"but there is nothing better to be found. My Julka was of another sort; but I shall not find her like again. And as to kindness, why it was never my way to beat the women-folk. Then,

thanking your graciousness," he concluded, kissing Madame Wolska's black woollen sleeve, "if the noble Pani will speak to the young woman to-night, and to-morrow I shall send the bridesmen with the *wódki*."

CHAPTER IV.—WEDDING CEREMONIES.

"Eh nun heirathen wir eben
Das übrige wird sich geben."

—GOETHE.

No; Magda had no lover as yet, as Filip had remarked, so there was nothing to prevent her from becoming his wife. It is true she had liked to laugh and joke with the handsome Danelo, and at the village merry-makings he had been her most constant partner; but no one, not even Magda herself, had taken these attentions to mean anything serious—in fact, nothing serious could be meant by a lad who had not a penny of his own in the world. Living from hand to mouth, he earned his bread in a careless lazy fashion, taking service wherever chance directed, now with one master, now with another, never long in one place. Often chastised by the men and turned out of doors for indolence and inexactitude, he was almost as frequently begged back into favour by the women. It was only the very oldest and sourest of the fair sex who failed to be won by the half-childish, half-impudent grace of the fair-haired youth, whose blue eyes had such a dancing light in them, whose smile was so irresistible. He was the handsomest lad in the village, as Magda was the bonniest lass, and if he singled her out in preference to the other maidens, it was but the mutual attraction of two bright young beings who feel their fitness for each other. It was an innocent and natural coquetry that made each

of them aware that the other's beauty completed their own.

Neither Madame Wolska nor Filip Buska had for a moment contemplated the possibility of a refusal on Magda's part, nor did Magda herself contemplate refusing the honour thus unexpectedly thrust upon her. She was amazed, bewildered at this surprising turn of fate; but she would as little have thought of saying No, as would a beggar refuse a fortune which came in his way unawares.

He was a peasant, and she was a peasant lass, yet for all that it was a very great marriage for Magda, for Filip was indisputably the first man in the village, and she, as his wife, would enjoy a position to which she would never have thought of aspiring. He was sure to be chosen *wojt* (village bailiff) before long, as everybody knew; for the present *wojt*, old Gregory, had taken to drinking, and his memory was beginning to fail. Filip was already the real *wojt* in all but the name; it was to him that every one in the village came for advice and direction, and his opinions and decisions were accepted as matters of gospel.

Nevertheless it would be untrue to say that joy and exultation were the only prevailing sentiments in Magda's mind as she prepared to receive the bridesmen who had been delegated to make

the formal application for her hand.

Filip was so grave, so stern-looking, that she thought she would never be able to feel quite at her ease beside him. Magda had had her dreams, like all other girls; and whenever she had seen in her visions the event which is so all-important to every woman, be she high or lowly born, there had always been thereto a prelude of soft glances and tender attentions, of presents offered and labour shared, of walks and dances together, all of which were missing from the reality which had so suddenly taken the place of the vision. Nothing remained here but a grave and melancholy man, who was asking her to come and look after his children and boil his potatoes.

Nevertheless the prospect, such as it was, was one which many a village girl would envy; and Magda herself was sensible enough to be ashamed of the latent feeling of disappointment of which she was not wholly able to divest herself, and she was quite ready to love her husband if he would only let her.

So the bridesmen came, and the *wódk*i was drunk, and a white cloth given over to them in token of assent, and a week later shining periwinkle garlands were twined to deck out the bride.

Two days before her wedding-day, Magda, returning from the village, met young Danelo on the road. She had not seen him since the event had been decided.

"What news is this, pretty Magda?" he cried out. "So you are going to wear a cap?"

"Yes, by your leave," she answered, laughing. "Why should I not?"

"Why, I thought you were going to wait for me?" he answered in the same tone. "I am going to

be a soldier. In three years I shall come back from the war with a sackful of gold."

"More likely the sack will be as empty as your head," jested Magda.

"Who knows!" he said lightly. "Maybe you are right; but bid me farewell, Magda, and give me a kiss."

"Nonsense," said Magda, more seriously; "I am Filip's bride."

"You will not? Then never mind; perhaps you will be kinder when I return. There are plenty girls in the village down there, ay, and wives too, who are not so prudish," and he went away singing—

"All the girls they tell me
I'm a handsome lad;
If I look at Halka,
Straightway Felka's sad.

If I dance with Hanna,
Zosia hangs her head;
If I kiss Olenka,
Kasza's eyes are red.

Wife I therefore cannot,
Really cannot take,
For you see so many
Other hearts would break."

The wedding-day came, and all the marriage-ceremonies were celebrated according to the custom of the place. The wedding-guests assembled in front of the great house and sang—

"Noble master ours,
Noble master ours,
You have many flowers
Growing on your land.
We a joyful band
At your threshold stand;
We have come to pray,
Do not say us nay—
One of yonder flowers
Give us to be ours.

Noble lady fair,
In your chamber there
You have maidens rare;
Eyes like stars so bright,
Skin like milk so white,
Hair as black as night.

We have come to pray,
Do not say us nay—
Yonder pretty maid
Give us ere she fade.”

After the masters of the house
have signified their consent, and
the bride has been led forward, the
bridesmaids sing—

“Hawthorn berries rosy red
Crown Marysia's bonny head ;
Hawthorn blossoms bright and fair
Bind a wreath to deck her hair.”

Then the bride, or one of the other
girls in her place, sings—

“Oh, my mother, tell me true,
Will my eyes be always blue ?
Shall I always be as fair
As the flowers in my hair ?

Will my lips be always red
Like the berries on my head ?
Like the flowers my skin as white,
Will my eyes be always bright ?”

Some one in the name of the
parents gives the following an-
swer—

“Nay, my foolish daughter, nay,
You are only fair to-day ;
Once a wife and not a maid,
Then your beauty soon will fade.

Grey will turn your raven hair,
Brown the skin that is so fair,
Day by day and hour by hour,
Like unto a faded flower.”

On hearing this, the young girl's
desire for matrimony appears to
be somewhat cooled down, and she
sings—

“Parents dear, I pray,
Send me not away ;
Say the bridesmen no,
Do not let me go.
See my little foot
In its leather boot.
While the boots are new,
Let me bide with you ;
When the shoes are worn,
And the soles are torn,
Rent at heel and toe,
Only then I'll go !”

The parents, however, do not
close with this offer of their daugh-
ter, and are of opinion that she

has lived with them quite long
enough—

“Nay, my daughter, nay,
Here you cannot stay.
Many boots you've worn,
Many clothes you've torn :
You must now be wed,
And your daily bread
Elsewhere you must find ;
For your mother kind,
And your father true,
Have no more for you.
Cut your raven hair—
No more wreath you'll wear ;
Call the holy priest ;
Bake the wedding-feast ;
Sound the harp and lute—
Flowers must turn to fruit.”

Towards the close of the cere-
mony the bride's hair is cut to
about the height of her shoulders,
her wreath is taken off, and she is
solemnly invested with the cap,
which henceforward marks her as
a matron. This taking off of the
wreath has given rise to countless
songs and rhymes : one of these is
as follows, and was sung at Magda's
wedding :—

“‘Oh, why do you weep, my bonny lass,
By the river Don to-day ?’
‘I weep to-day for my golden wreath
Which the water has swept away.’

‘Oh, do not weep more, my bonny lass,
For I have a milk-white swan,
And he will fetch back your golden
wreath
From out of the river Don.’

And the milk-white swan, he swam so
fast,

But the crown swam faster yet.
‘My bonny gold wreath ! my virgin
wreath !

I weep for you, and I fret !’

Then the milk-white swan, he spread
his wings,

And flew through the air apace ;
But the golden wreath he could not
reach,

And the swan, he lost the race.

For though faster yet, and faster still

Pursued it the flying swan ;
The golden wreath, it sank down be-
neath

The waves of the river Don !

The maiden she stood by the water-
side,
And she loudly cried, 'Dear swan !
Oh bring me back my bonny gold
wreath

From out of the river Don !'

No wreath brought back the milk-
white swan,
For he could not find it more ;
But a dainty cap of linen fine
In his beak aloft he bore.

'Your wreath it is lost, my bonny lass,
But 'tis useless to repine ;
So dry your sweet eyes, and deck your
head
With this cap of linen fine.'

The linen cap it was gently placed
Her jetty curls upon,
But over the maiden's golden wreath
Rolled the waves of the river Don."

Madame Wolska had presented Magda with sheets and pillow-covers on her marriage; and she sent down supplies of apples and sausages, white bread and brandy, to furnish the wedding-feast. But though there was good fare in plenty, there was no sense of gaiety among the wedding-guests; the impression left by the cholera was as yet too recent to be got rid of. None of the usual games and jokes were practised on this occasion; there was little singing, and no dancing, and not a single man drank more *wódki* than was good for him. It was all as decorous, and nearly as dull, as a court ceremony. Nevertheless, all the details of the ceremony were carefully observed; and when the loaves were cut, the "Song of the Wheaten Bread," which belonged to the village programme, was sung, inserting as usual the names of the new-married couple.

SONG OF THE WHEATEN BREAD.

"Come, wheaten bread, and tell me
true,
Who was it ploughed your field ?'
Filip it was, and Magda too ;
They met first in that field.

He looked at her,
And gave a sigh,—
The furrows were
All ploughed awry.'

'Come, wheaten bread, and tell me
true,
Who was it cut the corn ?'
Filip it was and Magda who
Together cut the corn.
He there began
The lass to court,—
The corn it was
Cut all too short.'

'Come, wheaten bread, and tell me
who
The corn threshed in the barn ?'
Filip it was, and Magda too,
Who threshed it in the barn.
And while they threshed
He stole a kiss,—
The work, alas !
Was done amiss.'

'Come, wheaten bread, and tell me
who
The corn took to the mill ?'
Filip it was, and Magda too,
Who took it to the mill.
With tender care
He shared her load,—
Much grain was spilt
Upon the road.'

'Come, wheaten loaf, and tell me true,
Who was it baked the bread ?'
Filip it was and Magda who
Together baked the bread.
He pressed her then
To be his wife,
And swore to love her
All his life.'

'Come, wheaten loaf, and tell me true
Who will now eat this bread ?'
Filip will eat, and Magda too,
Herewith this loaf of bread.
And if they have
Forgot the salt,
They cannot complain,—
'Twas their own fault !'"

That this song was not particularly appropriate to the wedding in question was evident to any one who knew Filip Buska, whose mind was so extremely well balanced that even if he had been in love it was hardly likely that the tender

passion should find expression in crooked furrows or spilt grain. But etiquette demanded that it should be sung all the same.¹

CHAPTER V.—THE GOD OF SLEEP.

"My banks they are furnished with bees,
Whose murmur invites one to sleep."

—SHENSTONE.

Something more than three years had passed since Magda became the wife of Filip Buska, and he had had no occasion to regret his choice. She kept his house tidy, and cooked his food to his liking; the children were fond of her, and the cow she had brought with her as dowry came in usefully in the housekeeping. They were able to make a little fresh butter for the market every week, and the calves fetched a good price.

As no child of her own had been sent to take the first place in her heart, Magda would fain have transferred the whole strength of her affections to her husband's little ones; but though they had from the first clung lovingly to this young and pretty new mamma, who was always ready to play with them and sing them songs, and who never scolded them, even when they upset a bowl of milk or tore their clothes, they were now grow-

ing big and independent, and did not care to be fondled and petted as of yore.

Was Magda happy in her married life? No one had ever thought of asking her that question, nor had she asked it of herself. Of course she must be happy. How could it be otherwise? Was she not mistress of the prettiest cottage in the village? and the best-kept garden? And had she not the best man in the village for her husband as well? There were men in the village who spent all their earnings in the brandy-shop; and there were men who had to go to the Jew every year for money to buy their boots and shirts; and there were many households where, when spring came round, the garners were empty of corn, and who had to scrimp and fast till after harvest-time; there were even men who beat their wives, and used hard words to-

¹ In Poland and Russia the wedding ceremonies are of a very dramatic character, and there are numberless traditional songs which form part of the programme. Most of these ditties resemble each other in character; but as a rule, each village or district has its own set of wedding-rhymes. Many of the wedding-songs lay great stress on the disadvantage of marrying a widower, and depict the prospects in the most uninviting colours; as, for instance:—

"If a widow'd man you wed,
Then you'll have a thorny bed.
He will praise his former wife
Till you're weary of your life;

"Then the children too will cry,
'Why did our own mother die?'
And the servants they will say
'Times were better. Lack-a-day!'"

Or the following, entitled "Grass and Straw":—

"Oh, bonny lass,
Your flowers are fair;
Sweet is the grass,
Golden your hair.

Alone the grass
Is sweet and fair,
Oh, bonny lass,
To bind your hair.

But straw is dry,
And straw is old;
And you will cry,
And he will scold.

In early spring
The birds will pair;
You have a ring,
Gold like your hair.

With grasses sweet
And flowers fair,
A garland meet
Bind for your hair.

Then take a lad
To be your mate,
A wid'wer sad
Is not your fate.

The straw can bind
But cannot keep,
Will come the wind
When he's asleep.

Oh give it to
The bonny lad,
The stone unto
The wid'wer sad.

But if you bind
With straw your crown,
Will come the wind
And blow it down.

Your eyes are blue,
Your hair is gold;
A lad can woo,
For youth is bold.

You have a stone,
'Tis hard and cold,
Then give it to
The wid'wer old.

Oh, bonny lass,
Your flowers are fair;
Sweet is the grass,
Golden your hair."

wards them, but Filip Buska was not that sort of man. He had never said a harsh word to Magda, and he only used his strong muscular arms for legitimate work. More than once Magda had had occasion to rejoice at her superior luck, when, late on Saturday nights, she had seen her neighbour, the careworn and overworked mother of seven children, leading home her reeling and drunken husband from the spirit-shop, where he had probably left more than half of his week's earnings. It would therefore have been very ungrateful on Magda's part, if she had not considered herself an exceptionally lucky and fortunate woman. She was dissatisfied with herself when she caught herself envying the handsomer sheepskin fur of some other woman, or when she heaved an involuntary sigh on meeting some other couple returning from church or market affectionately linked together. She knew very well that the sheepskin coat had not yet been paid for, and that the affectionate husband would most likely beat his wife when he reached home; yet over and over again she caught herself thinking that she would like her husband to hold her round the waist as that other man was doing, and that for the sake of a little more affectionate demonstration on his part, she would readily agree to put up with her share of counterbalancing blows. Blows could only make her back ache for an hour or two, but the placid indifference which always marked Filip's manner towards her was leaving an ache in her heart which grew stronger as time went on. Perhaps it was only the instinctive spirit of discontent which possesses many women, and makes them wish for what they have not got. Men are generally accused of not understanding the other sex; but

how on earth is a man to guess that his wife is pining because he does not beat her?

During the first year of their marriage, Magda had made many attempts to draw nearer to her husband, to share his interests and occupations, but her efforts had met with but scanty reward. Encouraged by his brilliant success as a coffin-maker, Filip had latterly given up more and more of his time to carpentry; and though rabbit-hutches and pigeon-houses could not, of course, be as remunerative as coffins, yet their fabrication during spare moments always brought in a welcome addition to the weekly earnings.

Recollecting what Filip had once said of Julka's useful service in that way, Magda had sought to imitate her example, and had often lingered about the shed which her husband had converted into a rough workshop; but for the most part he had seemed hardly aware of her presence, and never addressed her unless she made some mistake or knocked down one of his tools. Once when in a fit of zeal she had volunteered to plane a board for him, she had cut her wrist so severely that for a fortnight she had been unable to milk the cow.

"You are not fit for that sort of work, Magda," he had said, not unkindly but coldly; "you are too impatient to make a good carpenter. You will be of more use if you bide indoors and mind the children and the cooking. I can do my work alone."

Once in returning from market, where a litter of sucking-pigs and some heads of poultry had realised an exceptionally high price, she had ventured to ask her husband whether he would not this year add another string of corals to her necklace?

He looked at her with surprise.

"More corals! What do you

want more corals for? You have two rows already."

"But almost every woman in the village has three at least. Even Pawel Wodak, who has ten children and can scarcely feed them, gave his wife a new row last fair."

"More fool he," answered Filip. "Julka had only two, those same two that you wear, and she never thought of asking for more. She was not one of those silly wenches, like many in the village, who deck themselves out to make other women jealous, and to attract the eyes of the young men at church."

Magda thought to herself that Julka's plain freckled face had not been likely to disturb the peace of the church-goers of either sex, and perhaps she felt conscious that her glowing beauty deserved a richer frame than these two scanty rows of coral beads, for she answered—

"Julka was different."

"Yes; Julka was a sensible woman," said Filip, and there the conversation was dropped; and when some minutes later her husband remarked, "I was thinking that next month, when the cow calves, there will be just enough money to buy a turning-lathe," she did not venture to utter any expression of dissent.

The three years which had passed had brought but few changes in the village. About the time of Magda's marriage, Danelo had been taken away by the soldiers. His time of service was over by rights already, but he had not returned to the village. Perhaps he had taken service elsewhere, Magda thought, or else he might have married and settled down in some other part of the country.

Madame Wolska no longer resided at the great house: it was more than two years since she had left the place in her travelling

carriage, taking with her many trunks packed full of blue and green and rose-coloured gowns; for her time of mourning was over, and she was going to enjoy herself and see the world. People said she was travelling in foreign countries. Only once in these two years she had returned for a few weeks, merely to collect her rents and give some orders. She had had a new maid with her then—a thin, sharp-featured woman, whom they called Mademoiselle Josephine, and who held up her hands in horror at everything that she saw, and pronounced the country to be "*horrible! détestable!*" She it was who now "confectioned" the rainbow-coloured robes for her mistress, and whose deft fingers built up Sophie Wolska's luxuriant hair into that surprising edifice of curls and puffs which now replaced the smooth braids of her widowhood.

No rumour had as yet made people suppose that she contemplated giving a successor to the deceased Wolski. Apparently she was enjoying her liberty, and had not as yet found it worth her while to barter it against a new name.

On a fine evening on one of the last days of July, Magda was sitting on the little bench before the cottage-door. There was no more work to be done for the day, and she was enjoying an hour of rest before supper-time.

It had been one of those few days which come to us in midsummer, where nature is quite passive, and suspends for a few passing hours her eternal labour of alternate creation and destruction. Every leaf had already expanded to its full size, every blade of grass had grown to its utmost height, every flower had deepened its chalice to its full depth, every brilliant insect was let free from its shrouding chrysalis. The young birds were all fledged, and flown from their nests. Every-

thing was at its prime ; it was the short-lived season of perfect beauty and vigour, as removed from the unfinished crudeness of youth as from the decay of old age. Spring, as represented by eggs, and buds, and chrysalis, was of the past, but autumn fruits were still of the future ; and though June was over, full-blown roses and carnations were still the order of the day.

There were no roses in Filip's garden, however—they were not useful flowers, he said ; and only such as had well-established claims, as hard-working domestic plants, were admitted within his paling. No flaunting marigolds or dahlias, no useless pansies, no foolish forget-me-nots. Only the substantial sunflower, whose oil was valuable ; the scarlet-runner, whose qualities are well known ; and the praiseworthy poppy, whose seeds would be collected by-and-by, to be sold at the market, and baked into Christmas cakes. But they were pretty for all that, those virtuous household flowers ; for after all, beauty and merit are not always at variance in this world, and some few useful things are handsome as well.

The poppies covered the whole space at one side of the garden ; the rich variety of tones to be found among them going far to make up for the exclusion of other flowers. The white ones, so delicately transparent, so exquisitely crimped, were like some magnified and idealised anemone ; the crimson and lilac varieties replaced all the scale of tints of the carnation and verbena tribes, though they could not rival them in sweetness ; while the large pink ones, seen from a little distance, were a very fair apology for the exiled cabbage-roses.

The sunflowers, standing in a row against the whitewashed cottage wall, had been staring at their great master the sun all day, in mute admiration, drinking in his

rays, and spreading out each golden petal in his sight with tender worship, to be burnt by him into a richer hue. And, like servile courtiers as they were, now that their master was sinking down to rest behind the low range of wooded hills, they thought it necessary to follow his example, and began to sink lower themselves, hanging their yellow heads wearily on their stalks, and curling up their petals, in *blasé* indifference to everything else now that he was gone.

Magda was feeling very solitary on this lovely summer evening ; she was so lonely sitting here on this roomy bench, which seemed constructed rather for tender duets than for solitary reveries. If she had at least had a baby of her own to lay on her knee, she would not have felt so utterly alone. Something soft and warm which belonged to her, and which she had a right to keep beside her. She had taken up little Kasza on her lap, and had tried to make her rest her curly dark head against her shoulder : but the child, impatient of the caresses, had struggled down again, and ran off to join her brother Kuba at a game of romps.

She had already rubbed and scoured each pot and pan till it shone again, and had set the supper to boil, so there was nothing further to do. She went and looked into the open shed where her husband was at work. His back was turned towards her, and the rough rasping sound of his saw caused her footsteps to be unheard. She stood looking at him for a minute or two in silence, but made no further effort to attract his attention, then she turned away and went into the stables alongside.

The two small lean horses had already lain down to rest their wearied limbs ; the large speckled cow, more leisurely in her proceedings, was still chewing the fragrant

heap of grass and clover before her. Magda flung her arms round the old cow's neck with a sudden movement of unwonted affection. She buried her face on its warm soft shoulder, while a few heavy, burning, and utterly illogical tears rolled down on to the heap of fodder.

The animal arrested its chewing for a moment, and turned its large soft eyes in gentle reproach upon her—"What was the meaning of this unnecessary burst of excitement? Why could she not go and eat her grass and clover in peace, and leave other people to do the same?" That is what this gaze seemed to say.

Magda took the hint, and returned to her former post on the garden bench.

No sound in the air reached her here save the faint rasp of the saw at intervals, and the buzzing of some score of vagabond bees, which had missed the grand flitting of the hives to their summer quarters in the forest, and coming back unawares to the place of their former residence, had found their colony vanished into thin air. Only the wooden stakes which had propped up the hives remained, and round these the outcasts circled in puzzled dismay, trying vainly to discover some clue to this mystery.

The heavy narcotic scent of the poppies filled the air, for the burning July sun had extracted their subtle essence during the day, and sent it floating all around.

Each of these brilliant flowers was a prison-cell in which lay fettered a slave of the great God of Sleep; but their master's enemy, the Sun, had unwittingly set them free to hover aloft, wafting peace and repose to weary mortals and aching hearts.

This soothing influence was felt ere long by all the inmates of the little garden. The birds had stopped singing on the branches of the

apple-trees; the bees no longer hurried in frenzied circles round the site of their lost home, but settled down contentedly to rest in clusters on the wooden stakes. Magda herself, after a while, felt an unwonted peace and quiet stealing over her. Her tears ceased to flow, and she leant back against the cottage wall. She closed her eyes, and presently was fast asleep.

She slept so soundly that she never heard any of the carts which passed by the road in front of the garden; the barking of a dog in a neighbouring field did not disturb her; neither did she hear how Kuba and Kasza came running in later at the front wicket shouting and laughing, to disappear again behind the house.

Of course she never saw how a young man, with a fair moustache and in a soldier's dress, was coming along the highroad nearer and nearer; and she slept on even when, with graceful activity, he had vaulted over the garden-hedge and was standing before her. In fact she did not awake till just one second too late; for that was after this particularly impertinent young man had bent down and deposited a resounding salute on her cheek. Then she started to her feet, and stood confronting the culprit with bewildered indignation.

Scarcely did she recognise in the handsome and martial figure before her the boyish Danelo of three years ago; and when she had at last grasped the fact that this was indeed her old playmate, she did not feel the offence to be the more pardonable on that score. "How could he dare? Such insolence! Such unheard-of audacity! And she a married woman!"

"Don't be angry," said Danelo, trying to look contrite. "I really could not help it, and I forgot all about your being married. I was so happy to see the village again

that I would have kissed the first woman I saw, whether asleep or awake—even old Katinka, if I had happened to see her first. Indeed I should.”

This was hardly such a conciliatory argument as at first sight appeared; for though Magda was really very angry with Danelo for having kissed her, yet somehow she did not care to hear that he would have been as ready to commit this heinous offence in the case of old Katinka. Therefore she tried to keep up her dignity for a little longer, and told herself that Danelo must have become a very wicked man during these three years of absence. She would not even admire his bright scarlet facings, which were putting the poppies to shame, nor his shining boots, nor his glittering sword; but she could not help acknowledging to herself that the man Danelo was handsomer far than the boy Danelo had been.

Stern moralising ill suited her age, and reproving words coming from coral lips sounded strangely out of place. No doubt Magda felt this herself; for when at last Danelo, looking up at her with his frankly impudent gaze, said,—“Come, Magda, you have scolded me quite enough; I will be good, and never do it again. Surely you will bid me welcome now? I have had no welcome as yet. And you will let me rest awhile on your bench, for I am footsore and weary?” she was fain to lay aside her unnatural rôle and extend her hand half grudgingly in tardy welcome; and though he did not look either footsore or weary, she could not do otherwise than grant him a place on the bench.

The same bench, which had seemed to her so uselessly wide only half an hour before, now seemed to have suddenly narrowed its dimensions; for the green cloth

uhlanka was continually brushing against Magda's linen sleeve, and her bare foot more than once came in contact with the rude steel spur. In eager conversation time flew by rapidly, there was so much to ask and tell on both sides: the births, deaths, and marriages of the parish for the last three years; the result of the harvests; the innovations in road and forest. Then there were old reminiscences to be exchanged and memories to be refreshed; so that when, an hour later, Filip, leaving the shed where it had now become too dark to work, re-entered the garden, he found them still deep in such conversation as this: “Do you remember, Magda, the year the wheat grew on the low meadow near the river?” Or, “Danelo, have you forgotten the evening we danced in the barn?” Or, “How wet we got the day we gathered the hazel-nuts!”

Kuba and Kasza now appearing on the scene, remained rooted to the spot in mute admiration of this dazzling visitor, in his showy lancer uniform.

“Are those your children, Magda?” asked Danelo, abruptly.

“Nonsense, Danelo!” said Magda, with heightened colour. “Do not you see that they cannot be mine? Kuba and Kasza are nearly seven years old, and I have been married but half that time.”

“How am I to know what a child of three years looks like?” answered Danelo, laughing, and showing all his even white teeth. “I never look at children. I only know that it seems an age since I saw you last, and that anything might have happened since then.”

“It is time for the children to be put to bed,” now remarked Filip, somewhat churlishly. He had taken no part in the conversation as yet.

Magda rose hastily, and entered the house.

TAXATION AND REPRESENTATION UNDER THE NEW REFORM BILL.

THE Franchise Bill discussions of the past month have had about them a flavour of optimism which would have been amusing if the occasion had been less serious. So far as the measure itself is concerned, everybody has, in spite of dire misgivings, hoped for the best. One and all of us would fain believe that the electorate is merely to be so much larger, that its subdivisions are to be rearranged, and that everything else is to go on as before. But even if the leap in the dark must be taken, does it follow that we should take it with our eyes shut? We may no longer have a choice, but we may at least endeavour to prepare ourselves for the Hobson's choice which a Government with majorities of from a hundred to a hundred and twenty presents to us.

The regular politician is evidently at fault here, perhaps because his habit is to look only at political consequences. He can estimate what the probable effect will be, in his own circle, of nearly doubling the county constituencies. If he be a Radical, he chuckles at the prospect of a new world for the caucus to conquer and to tyrannise over. If he be a Tory, he is aghast at the idea of some of his ancient strongholds falling before the trumpets and the rams' horns of Birmingham. His sole thought is of redistribution, some careful shuffling of the cards which may here and there ward off Radical attack, and save a chosen remnant for a new Tory party to be built upon. But while the immediate political effects absorb attention, there are other possible effects far more grave and threatening being overlooked. While we fancy that we

are only enlarging the electorate, we may be laying the foundation of a new state of society with different feelings, tendencies, and aims from our own. In what looks so simple and so just as the equalisation of the county and the borough franchise there may lurk the seeds of a new fiscal policy and a new financial system. It may prove that the real difficulty and danger of reducing the franchise goes deeper than redistribution, and has much wider ramifications. That the balance of parties should be upset, and perhaps permanently disturbed, is a sufficiently serious matter; but it would be a worse prospect still if the fundamental principles on which the country is administered were to be jeopardised, as they very possibly will be when the new electorate begins to realise its power. The really grave question of the time is not whether the new constituencies will be Tory or Radical, but what amount of mischief they are likely to do. Assuming, as for prudence' sake we ought, that they will be Radical, how far are they likely to adopt the peculiar ideas of property which Mr Henry George and his imitators are instilling into them in advance? What line may they be expected to take in regard to taxation? Will they at the earliest opportunity hoist anew Mr Bright's rather faded banner, the "Free Breakfast-table," thereby shunting what little remains on their own shoulders of the national charges on to the shoulders of the income-tax payers?

If the new constituencies should resist these tendencies, they will be wonderfully virtuous and self-denying. The temptation to evil

set before them will be strong, and the tempters will be numerous and plausible. To confine ourselves to only one branch of the network of future developments, the financial policy of the country may, and very probably will, take a wholly new character from the new constituencies who will have it under their absolute control. Hitherto the national income has been levied on principles which in a rough way adapt themselves to the various classes of the community, doing, as far as possible, justice to all. The poor man has paid his small share of the public burdens in the shape of a percentage on his beer and tobacco, his wife's tea or coffee, and two or three articles of grocery, such as currants and raisins. His bread is free, his beef, his bacon, his butter, his cheese, his eggs, his vegetables, and, in fact, all his necessities of life come to him without the slightest intervention of the tax-gatherer. He lives in an untaxed house, though everybody who can afford to pay £20 a-year of rent has to contribute to the State 9d. per £1 of house-duty. He has a few local rates to bear; but there again he is privileged in comparison with his fellow-citizens who have a little more to spend. His landlord is permitted to compound for his rates on very favourable terms, and to collect them as part of his rent. It is questionable if his rent would be much reduced were there no taxes to pay out of it. But the most significant aspect of local rates as regards the working classes is that the latter benefit by them far beyond what they contribute to them. The poor-rates are in effect an insurance fund for sick or superannuated labourers and their dependants. Every man with a family to maintain on a pound per week or less is all his life long rubbing shoulders as it were

with pauperism. He may by an accident or by the loss of work be thrown on the rates at any moment. His personal contribution to them is infinitesimal, but his beneficial interest in them is considerable. A skilled workman, earning from thirty shillings to two pounds per week, and occupying a house of less than twenty pounds rent, contributes less to the poor-rates than to his friendly society or to his trades-union, though both funds have a good deal in common. They are insurance funds which every contributor has a chance, however remote, of having one day to take advantage of. But there is this important difference, that while the trades-union or the friendly society three-fourths of the poor-rates is derived from non-beneficiaries. Strictly speaking, the working man cannot consider them a tax at all; they are a provision—made for the most part by his wealthier neighbours—for his poverty or old age.

Though in a less degree, nearly every other local rate has a beneficial as well as a fiscal character in relation to the poor. School rates represent the contribution of the community at large to the education of poor men's children. Sanitary and improvement rates have been a mighty engine for conferring on the poor healthy homes, spacious airy streets, public parks, and recreation-grounds. No single ratepayer can properly regard them as a burden, and to the classes who feel them least and get most from them they have been a positive boon. Whatever has made civic life more enjoyable, more refined, more sociable, has helped to lower inequalities between rich and poor. In so doing it has yielded results which none of us can measure by its accidental

cost to ourselves. Whoever has paid most for civic improvements may be thankful to have got such a return for his money. Those whom they have cost nothing, or next to nothing, may be proportionately more grateful. Under modern conditions of society local rates well applied are outlays for important social objects—charity, health, education, and the amenities of life. People who appreciate happy, comfortable homes, find it easy to go a step further and to wish to have all the surroundings of home correspondingly happy and agreeable. Hitherto the middle and upper classes have borne practically the whole burden of this great work of social renovation. The working classes have had only a nominal share in it so far as finding the money goes, but they have had a full share in the benefit of it.

Both as a taxpayer and a ratepayer the working man—our future political master—has had a fairly good time even in the state of bondage from which he is about to be set free. He is the lightest taxed person in Europe, and, Soudan campaigns notwithstanding, his personal burdens steadily tend to grow lighter. For that assertion we have the authority of the working man's own "political economist," Professor Leone Levi. In a paper which he read last December before the Statistical Society on the distribution of taxation, Professor Levi stated that from 1831 to 1880 imperial taxation had averaged 40s. 10d. per head of the people; and in the three years from 1880 to 1882 it had been 40s. 7d. per head; but in 1882-83, when the bombardment of Alexandria and the suppression of Arabi Pasha had to be paid for, it rose to 41s. per head. The rate of reduction is more conspicuous when measured by the national income, from which

the taxes are taken. In the first ten years of the present century the State taxes were in the proportion of 10 per cent of the national income; but in 1882-83, they represented only 7.3 per cent. The comparison with European taxation is no less favourable. The average in France at the date of the latest return was 51s. 6d. per head, or about 12.8 per cent of the national gross income of the nation. Light as is the average taxation in this country, it has the greater merit of equitable distribution. In this we are again expressing the impartial conclusions of Professor Leone Levi, who reckons that while the middle and higher classes pay 66s. per head of imperial taxes, the working classes escape for 25s. 11d. per head. That is making a very liberal allowance for working class consumption of dutiable articles. On a more exact calculation given hereafter, the rate at which working men and their families contribute to imperial taxation is barely 24s. per head per annum, while the middle and upper classes pay on an average nearly five times as much per head. Taking imperial and local taxes together, the average for the middle and higher classes is, according to Professor Levi, £6, 4s. 8d. per head, and for the working classes only 35s. 11d. per head. Professor Levi thus sums up the results of recent fiscal legislation in a form which derives significance from the probability that the County Franchise Bill will mark a new departure in this as in several other yet unsuspected directions:—

"It is indeed apparent that the fiscal legislation of late years has been all in favour of the working classes, and that scarcely any attempt has been made to replace the taxes removed affecting them by others hav-

ing an equal incidence. The improved condition of working men in respect of taxation is, moreover, still more remarkable when we take into account their increasing wages. In 1842, the average earnings of a working man's family of four and a half persons was about 15s. per week, or £39 a-year, and on this he had to pay about £6, 3s., or in the proportion of 16 per cent. In 1882, the average earnings of such a family being 30s. a-week, or £78 a-year, and the tax £5, 16s., the proportion of taxation is only $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, which is again greatly diminished when the working man's family abstains from consuming either alcoholic drink or tobacco."

With the support of such facts and such authorities—Mr Giffen has given even stronger testimony to the same effect—it is surely permissible to maintain that the British workman of the present day has been fairly, nay, indulgently treated in the adjustment of taxation, both municipal and imperial. It may be taken for granted, however, that the more direct power the working man acquires in this matter, the more jealously will he scrutinise his own share of liability for the cost of that self-government which he has been taught to consider one of his rights of flesh and blood. Being absolute, he will very naturally take good care of himself and of his own class. It will not be difficult to persuade him—and there will be lots of glib agitators ready for the job—that the taxes which fall on himself are radically bad, while those which fall on other people have much to recommend them. When the tea duty, for instance, comes into competition with the income-tax, or with a higher scale of death duties, there need be no hesitation as to how his choice will incline. When he has carried his "Free Breakfast-table," as he is pretty certain to do in the first householder Parliament, he may boggle a little at free whisky and free tobacco, but some salve will

be found for his unsophisticated conscience. Sir Wilfrid Lawson might cheerfully undertake to keep the nation sober with Glenlivet at half-a-crown a gallon, if Parliament would authorise him to close all the public-houses. Some future Bright may discover a medicinal virtue in the Virginian weed sufficient to condemn as barbarous and immoral the levying of from eight to nine millions sterling a-year of taxes on its consumption. Take away tea, tobacco, and whisky, and the whole fabric of our Customs duties totters to its fall. The Free-trade argument will at once come into play, "Why shackle and obstruct trade for the sake of duties which hardly pay the expenses of collection?" The gracious and genial reformer who compiles the 'Financial Reform Almanack' has already raised, in anticipation, the cry of "Down with the Custom-house!" In his issue for the current year he asserts (p. 175) that "if the people only knew how greatly they are pillaged and injured by this system of raising the revenue, all the forces of the Government would not suffice to maintain it for a single year." At the close of a characteristic anathema he delivers himself of this ominous reflection: "The sugar duties were happily abolished in 1874, and the sooner all the rest of the relics of barbarous fiscal legislation are made to follow, the better it will be for every man, woman, and child in the three kingdoms."

It is well to see and to realise clearly what are likely to be the ruling ideas of the coming dispensation. This we may be quite sure of, that it will be a dispensation in which the majority govern, and the minority pay for being governed. All the political power will be on one side; nearly all the taxation will be on the other. The working

man may not only live tax-free, for he is almost that already; but he will have the much more exquisite satisfaction of taxing those who may be better off than himself. In other words, he will have the privilege of indirectly spending a great deal of money which does not belong to him, but which he will be enabled to lay hold of in the name of the law. That the taxpayers will be few, and the tax-spenders will be many, is for Radicalism one of the special charms of the new *régime*. There is a fascination in the impending scramble which agitators can scent afar off. It opens to their straining eyes visions of well-paid lobbying, of well-lined political coffins, of lucrative notoriety. Paid membership and triennial Parliaments will be comparatively venial innovations on the old traditions and decencies of political life. In a turmoil where the neediest adventurer may hope one day to come to the surface, any wild scheme may be proposed and find listeners. Any attack may be made on property by those who have nothing to lose, and the sorriest Bradlaugh or Henry George may reckon on a Gladstone or a Chamberlain to throw an *ægis* of respectability over him. The respectable mask will prepare the way for the repulsive doctrine which in its own nakedness would be harmless. Here is a peculiar peril of the coming Radicalism. It has in the popular mind invested itself with so many catchwords of morality and religion that when it chooses it can make spoliation look the reverse of robbery. A second peculiar peril lies in the facilities which our fiscal system offers for proceeding by slow and almost imperceptible degrees from taxation to confiscation. There is no definite frontier line between the two. The land-tax, the death duties,

even the income-tax itself, may in clever hands become the instruments of fiscal plunder, and it might be difficult as well as dangerous to call the operation by its proper name.

A system in which the few are taxed by the many who take care not to tax themselves is essentially vicious, and it cannot avoid producing vicious fruit. Such, so far as taxation is concerned, will be the tendency of the electorate about to be created. The proportion it will contain of taxation to representation will be even smaller than Jack Falstaff's allowance of bread to his sack. The present electorate, numbering roughly about 3,000,000 of voters, is to have added to it at least two millions, possibly two and a half millions, of new voters. These will be all of one class—the class which pays least taxation, and is least qualified to judge of what wise and just taxation should be. The representation of property as such will in the new *régime* cease to exist. Just now there is a pretence of such representation, and property has a flickering shadow of power, but in future it will be rather a disadvantage than an assistance in politics. Nevertheless it is property in the long-run, and not labour, that pays for the government of the country. To an extent far greater than even Conservative politicians suspect, the propertied class are the effective taxpayers. According to the latest returns, there are on the electoral rolls of the United Kingdom 3,048,424 electors, not more than one in eight of whom has other than a personal stake in the country. The other seven-eighths, though they make the loudest outcry about economy, are more interested in public expenditure than in public taxation. Estimating the total number of inhabited houses in the three kingdoms at six and a half millions, quite

five-sixths of them would appear to belong to the working and the lower middle class, who have this in common, that they pay the minimum of taxation. Only the other sixth (1,178,113) are occupied by people who can be said to have an interest in the State beyond the exercise of a hand-to-mouth existence. To get at the propertied classes, moreover, we must eliminate the lower grades of assessed houses. A man occupying a £30 or a £40 house may be above the rank of a labourer, but he is still in the wage class, whose contributions to taxation are restricted to a few Customs or Excise duties. If we strike off all the houses between £20 and £30, there is a reduction at once of about 440,000, or three-eighths of the total number of assessed houses. If we raise the dividing line to £50 rental, a further 350,000 houses, or one-third of the total, has to be struck off. Above the £50 rental line we have left only 380,000 assessed houses, the occupiers of which form the inner circle of the fiscal grindstone.

Broadly speaking, only one-third of the houses in Great Britain paying inhabited-house duty have a valued rental of £50 or over. Only one in eighteen of the total number of inhabited houses in Great Britain reaches the £50 limit. We are putting Ireland aside at present, as it furnishes no details for such an analysis as this. Confining ourselves to the United Kingdom, for which exact official information can be obtained, the outcome is, that out of 5,889,902 inhabited houses, only about 320,000 were valued at £50 or over. The trading and propertied classes, who may be supposed to occupy the houses of £50 a-year and over, are therefore as one in eighteen of the total householders of the country. This

£50 limit has an obvious fiscal importance. It marks the distinction between the wage class and the class who have something more than wages, whether it be realised property, professional skill, commercial position, or brain-power. It may also be used as a rough boundary-line between the ordinary and the special taxpayer. It is on the £50 householder that the income-tax begins to tell. If the occupier of a £30 or a £40 house has to submit to that popular impost, he gets the benefit of a substantial rebate in the assessment of his income; but the £50 householder will have to pay on his whole £400 a-year. He and all above him come in for the lion's share of class taxation, as distinguished from the poll-tax raised in the elementary form of Customs duties. They are specially taxed on their houses, on their incomes, on their gold and silver plate, on the "buttons" who runs their messages, on the crests they put on their note-paper, on the "little bill" which they sometimes have to give in lieu of cash to their butcher or their baker, on their marriage settlements, on their fire insurance, on their patent medicines, on their wills; and after they are dead, on the residue of their estates, if any. The British workman may be a teetotaller, he may eschew tobacco, he may be sparing of tea, and thus have practically no taxes to pay at all; but the unfortunate with £400 a-year or more can never escape. As Sydney Smith said of the old protectionist tariff, the tax-gatherer follows him from his cradle to his grave. We shall show by-and-by that it is out of his pocket the national expenditure is chiefly drawn. It is to him that Chancellors of the Exchequer nowadays invariably resort when a few extra

millions are needed for a little war or an Alabama arbitration. It has become his recognised privilege, on all exceptional occasions, to have to pay the reckoning. His friend the working man always looks to him with confidence and serenity for cash to "run the machine," but with every successive Parliament his personal share in the running of it is reduced. By-and-by his sole function will be to pay tribute, as the Bulgarians used to do to the Turks, and the rôle of the Turks will be very appropriately assumed by the former friends of the Bulgarians. In the good times to come property will have its political—meaning especially its financial—duties, but there will be little heard of its political rights.

"The incidence of taxation" is a familiar enough phrase on the lips of economists, and a small percentage of members of Parliament may have a faint notion of its meaning, but it has so far been handled only in a very superficial way. The most vague ideas prevail as to the proportions of taxation borne by the various classes of the community. Of late it has

been more systematically investigated, but the conclusions yet arrived at are crude and imperfect. Certain outstanding results may, however, be accepted as reliable. Economists have come to a kind of agreement as to the section of the population which may be distinguished as the wage classes. Its numbers have been estimated; its income has been roughly calculated; its expenditure is more difficult to reckon up, but still an approximation to it has been obtained. It is comparatively easy to trace out such items of its expenditure as apply to dutiable articles, and from these may be formed an idea of its quota of taxation. The first step in such an inquiry is to attempt a census of the wage class. This has been done by Professor Leone Levi, who is still working very zealously in the same interesting field of research. The latest conclusion he has arrived at is, that the wage-earners of the United Kingdom number rather more than eleven and a half millions. He classifies them as follows:—

A.—THE WORKING CLASS POPULATION.

Agricultural	1,899,000
Industrial—	
Miners, &c.	625,000
Metal workers	628,000
Textile do.	2,300,000
Artisans	2,973,000
	6,526,000
Miscellaneous	3,084,000
	11,509,000

Another estimate which has appeared in a monthly magazine raises the total to over twelve millions; and striking a medium, twelve millions may be taken as a sufficiently exact census of the wage class. Not all of them are

men, and not all of the men are heads of families; consequently, in estimating the numbers dependent on them, a low average per head has to be taken. Assuming thirteen million dependants, the wage class would represent altogether

twenty-five millions. The total population of the United Kingdom at last census (1881) exceeded thirty-five millions, but various deductions have to be made in order to get at the number in full citizenship and available for taxation. Soldiers, sailors, and merchant seamen abroad numbered 215,000; consequently the population actually resident was under 35 millions—in exact figures, 34,875,239. The paupers who pay no taxes exceed a million, of whom 799,296 are in England and Wales, 95,081 in Scotland, and 115,000 in Ireland—altogether, 1,010,061. The insane number more than a hundred thousand—namely, 81,600 in England and Wales, 11,600 in Scot-

land, and 29,500 in Ireland,—altogether, 112,700, a portion of whom, however, are also reckoned among the paupers. The prison population of the three kingdoms is between thirty and forty thousand, but four times that number would hardly cover the floating population who are in and out of jail all their lives. Reckoning in these and ticket-of-leave men, who average about ten thousand, the criminal class must be nearly a quarter of a million. Next there are aliens to be written off, in round numbers another quarter of a million. The effective tax-paying population of the country, after all these corrections have been made, shrinks into about $33\frac{1}{4}$ millions, thus:—

B.—THE TAX-PAYING POPULATION.

Gross population resident	.	.	.	34,875,239
Less paupers	.	.	1,010,061	
Insane	.	.	112,700	
Criminals	.	.	250,000	
Aliens	.	.	250,000	
				1,622,761
				33,252,478

These $33\frac{1}{4}$ millions are divisible in respect of fiscal charges into four classes: (1) The wage class, estimated as above at 25 millions; (2) the lower middle class, composed of small tradesmen, shopkeepers, and persons of narrow income, occupying houses of not more than £30 rental; (3) the middle class, composed of householders paying from £30 to £50 of valued rent; and (4) the professional and propertied class, living in houses of over £50 rental. There are no very definite data for distinguishing these four sections of the community, but the census of inhabited houses will guide us sufficiently for our present purpose. Of the 6,484,632 houses enumerated in 1881, fully five and a quarter millions were not assessed or assessable. Of

these fully four and three-quarter millions were occupied by the working class, and the other half-million by the lower middle class. To the latter may also be assigned about 300,000 houses, with a rental of from £20 to £30 a-year, making 800,000 houses, and about four millions of population. The middle class, consisting of householders at from £30 to £50 a-year, occupy half-a-million houses, and represent say two and a half millions of population. There remain for the professional and propertied class 380,000 houses at over £50 a-year, and occupied by a population of rather less than two millions. On the basis of about five persons to each family, we get the subjoined classification of the taxpaying community:—

C.—CLASSIFICATION OF HOUSEHOLDERS.

	Houses.	Population.
Working class, say	4,800,000	25,000,000
Lower middle class	800,000	4,000,000
Middle class	500,000	2,500,000
Professional and propertied class	380,000	1,900,000
	6,480,000	33,400,000

As taxpayers, the working class and the lower middle class are virtually alike. They form the outer and easiest circle of the fiscal grindstone. At the same time, they constitute together $27\frac{1}{2}$ millions, or about five-sixths of the taxpaying population. The middle class, forming fiscally the middle circle, numbers about four millions, or an eighth of the whole taxpaying community. The propertied class, or inner circle, is only an eighteenth of the whole.

Industrious statisticians have figured

out how much per head of the population is annually consumed of the various articles on which the public revenue is levied. It is not a complicated or difficult calculation, for our Customs tariff is now reduced to about seven or eight items, and the Excise is practically concentrated on two—spirits and beer. The subjoined list gives the annual rates of consumption per head, and the aggregate for the twenty-five million consumers forming the wage class :—

D.—DUTIABLE GOODS CONSUMED BY THE WORKING CLASS.

	Per Head. In lbs.	Total for 25 Million Consumers.
Cocoa	0.34	8,500,000
Coffee	0.88	22,000,000
Dried fruits	4.32	108,000,000
Tea	4.67	116,750,000
Tobacco	1.42	35,500,000
	Gals.	
Spirits	1.07	26,750,000
Beer	27.6	690,000,000

We have excluded foreign wines and spirits, the latter consisting chiefly of brandy, rum, and liqueurs, which cannot be said to be much used by the working classes. Any small injustice that may be done to them as taxpayers by this omission is amply corrected by the lib-

eral share of the tobacco duty set down to their credit. In the next table the quantities of dutiable goods consumed by them are multiplied by the respective duties, in order to ascertain the amounts contributed by the wage class to the public revenue under each head :—

E.—DUTIES PAID BY THE WORKING CLASS.

	Quantity. In lbs.	Duty. Per lb.	Amount.
Cocoa	8,500,000	1d.	£35,416
Coffee	88,000,000	2d.	725,000
Dried fruits	108,000,000	7s. per cwt.	337,500
Tea	116,750,000	6d.	2,918,750
Tobacco	35,500,000	3s. 6d.	6,212,500
	Gals.	Per Gal.	
Spirits	26,750,000	10s.	13,375,000
		Per Barrel.	
Beer	690,000,000	6s. 3d.	5,990,625
			£29,594,791

Thus, while the average taxation over the whole community exceeds £2 per head per annum, the share of the working class is in reality rather less than 24s. per head. Proportionately more of course has to be borne by the remaining eight millions, who, not being working men, have to make up for the immunities and the privileges of our political pets. In his recent Budget, Mr Childers stated the income from taxation of the past year at £71,866,000. Toward that the working class—forming 25 millions of people, or five-sevenths of the population—contributed, as shown above, about 29½ millions sterling, leaving 42¼ millions to be provided by the trading, professional, and propertied minority of about eight million people. The average taxation of the majority is under 24s. per

head, and of the minority £5, 2s. 6d. per head. It is a curious study to trace this distinction through the various branches of the revenue. Thus, of the £19,700,000 raised by Customs duty, the working class share appears to have been 10¼ millions; and of the £26,952,000 obtained from Excise, they have to get credit for fully nineteen millions. There, however, their taxation virtually ends; while for the middle and upper classes it is only beginning. The latter paid last year over 11½ millions sterling in stamps, fully one million in the shape of land-tax, fully a million and three-quarters in house-duty, and nearly 10¾ millions of income-tax, with all of which the working man had nothing to do. When tabulated, this analysis of the revenue is suggestive:—

F.—HOW TAXATION IS DISTRIBUTED.

	Working Class Share.	Lower Middle Class.	Trading and Propertied Classes.	Total.
Customs .	£10,229,166	£1,630,000	£7,841,834	£19,701,000
Excise .	19,365,625	3,170,000	4,416,375	26,952,000
Stamps .	...	...	11,620,000	11,620,000
Income-tax .	...	...	10,718,000	10,718,000
House-duty .	...	...	1,805,000	1,805,000
Land-tax .	...	...	1,070,000	1,070,000
	£29,594,791	£4,800,000	£37,471,209	£71,866,000

General average per head £2 1 1

Trading and propertied classes 8 10 6

Working and lower middle classes 1 4 0

It is more difficult to get at the respective shares of the middle and the propertied classes, but an approximation can be made to it. First we have to eliminate the lower middles, and to deduct their quota of the gross taxation, which, at 24s. per head for 4,000,000 people, is £4,800,000. The working class, £29,594,791, and the lower middle, £4,800,000, subtracted from the gross fiscal revenue — £71,866,000 — leaves £37,411,209 to be borne by the middle and the propertied classes

—borne, however, in very unequal shares. The middle class pay very little, if any, land-tax. Their 500,000 houses pay in the aggregate only half as much duty as the 380,000 houses of the class above them. Less than half of the middle class contribute to the income and property tax, and even that half have the benefit of the £120 remission on all incomes under £400. Assume that 300,000 of them are assessed under Schedule D—the total assessments being under £400,000—and that they return

their incomes at an average of £300, the rebate of £120 makes their taxed income only £180, which at last year's rate would be £3, 15s. per head, or £1,125,000 for the whole 300,000. Credit them with as much more under the other schedules—a most liberal assumption—and the middle class quota of the income-tax will be two and a quarter millions. The total yield of the income-tax as given in the

Budget was £10,718,000; consequently over eight millions of it fell directly on capital. If the stamp duties be divided in the same proportion—namely, one-fourth to the middle class and three-fourths to capital—the respective amounts paid will be £2,905,000 and £8,715,000. The average per head of the two classes, as thus adjusted, comes out with a startling divergence:—

G.—MIDDLE AND HIGHER CLASS TAXATION.

	Middle Class.	Upper Class.
	(2,500,000)	(1,900,000)
Customs }		
Excise }	£6,964,900	£5,293,300
Stamps .	2,905,000	8,715,000
Income-tax .	2,500,000	8,218,000
House-duty .	451,250	902,500
Land-tax .	...	1,070,000
	£12,821,150	£24,198,800
Average per head of middle class	£5, 2s. 6d.	
Average per head of professional and propertied class .		£12, 14s. 6d.

The twenty-nine millions who pay 24s. per head of taxation, the two and a half millions who pay £5, 2s. 6d. per head, and the 1,900,000 who pay £12, 14s. 6d. per head, are all to be politically equal in theory. In practice the large taxpayer may be thankful if he has any representation at all. An occasional share in a member of Parliament who is fortunate enough to run the gauntlet of the caucus and the trades-unions is the most he dare hereafter hope for.

The existing electorate is democratic enough, but the Conservative leaven in it will have a much harder struggle after the constituencies have been flooded with another million and a half or a million and three-quarters of Radical votes. How the flooding is to take effect may be worthy of a little timely anticipation. A recent Parliamentary return gives us the following view of the present electorate and its distribution:—

H.—THE EXISTING ELECTORATE.

	Counties.	Boroughs.	Total.
England and Wales .	932,860	1,591,451	2,524,311
Scotland .	96,870	201,529	298,399
Ireland .	168,217	57,497	225,714
	1,197,947	1,850,477	3,048,424

The total population of England and Wales at the last census was close on 26 millions, of whom there lived in counties 13,688,902, or almost 53 per cent; and in boroughs

12,285,537, or 47.29 per cent. The existing electors in counties form thus under 7 per cent of the whole population, and in boroughs about 13 per cent. Roughly speaking,

the county constituencies will be about doubled by any measure which aims at equalising their voting power with that of the boroughs. But the process of levelling down can be traced with the greatest minuteness by comparing the various electoral factors which would come into play under the new Bill. We can satisfy ourselves to a nicety how far it is likely to go on the one hand in the direction of household suffrage, and on the

other in the direction of manhood suffrage. The subjoined tables, which have been compiled with that object in view, give for each of the three kingdoms—(1) the gross population, with its present rate of voting power; (2) the number of adult males, with their present rate of voting power; and (3) the number of inhabited houses with their present rate of voting power:—

I.—VOTING POWER TO GROSS POPULATION.

	Population.	Voters.	Percentage of Voters to Population.
ENGLAND AND WALES—			
Counties . . .	13,698,493	932,860	6 $\frac{3}{4}$
Boroughs . . .	12,261,783	1,591,451	13
SCOTLAND—			
Counties . . .	2,080,245	96,870	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Burghs . . .	1,647,801	201,529	12
IRELAND—			
Counties . . .	4,285,385	168,217	4
Boroughs . . .	901,454	57,497	6 $\frac{1}{3}$
	34,875,239	3,048,424	8 $\frac{3}{4}$

Thus the existing constituencies range from 4 per cent of the gross population in Irish counties to 13 per cent in English boroughs. The introduction of a uniform standard of voting power for the three kingdoms involves a relatively much larger increase of votes in

Ireland than in either England or Scotland. Ireland contributes so little to imperial taxation that Mr Gladstone perhaps thinks she should have an opportunity of making amends by supplying proportionately more than her proper share of legislators.

K.—VOTING POWER TO ADULT MALES.

	Adult Males.	Voters.	Percentage of Voters to Adult Males.
ENGLAND AND WALES—			
Counties, . . .	3,112,000	932,860	29
Boroughs, . . .	2,793,000	1,591,451	57
SCOTLAND—			
Counties, . . .	509,312	96,870	19
Burghs, . . .	386,883	201,529	52
IRELAND—			
Counties, . . .	1,095,900	168,217	15
Boroughs, . . .	238,000	57,497	24
	8,135,095	3,048,424	37 $\frac{1}{2}$

Here the warning with regard to Ireland is emphatically reiterated. The highest existing ratio of voting power is in the English boroughs—57 per cent of the adult

male population; or, deducting paupers, criminals, imbeciles, and other ineligible, it may be practically 60 per cent. The next highest is in the Scottish burghs—

52 per cent; or, deducting ineligibles as before, it may be 55 per cent. Taking 55 per cent as the new ratio for both counties and

burghs, there will be the following substantial additions at once made to the register:—

	Percentage of Adult Males to be added to Register.	Number of Adult Males to be added to Register.
English counties	26	809,100
Scottish counties	36	183,348
Irish counties	40	438,360
Irish boroughs	31	83,780
Total number of adult males to be added to register if the constituencies were raised all round to 55 per cent		1,514,588

From the adult male we pass on to the householder, and repeat our test under conditions somewhat more definite:—

L.—VOTING POWER TO INHABITED HOUSES.

	Houses.	Voters.	Percentage of Voters to Houses.
ENGLAND AND WALES—			
Counties	2,733,045	932,860	34
Boroughs	2,098,476	1,591,451	76
SCOTLAND—			
Counties	409,677	96,870	22½
Burghs	329,328	201,529	61
IRELAND—			
Counties	784,271	168,217	22
Boroughs	129,837	57,497	44
	6,484,632	3,048,424	47½

The maximum voting power of the present constituencies appears again in the English boroughs 76 per cent, the Scottish burghs coming far behind with 61 per cent. The mean of the two is 69, or say, for convenience of calculation, 70

per cent. Were the whole of the constituencies to be raised to the English borough level, as it is the design of the reform-mongers they should be, the following additions would result:—

	Percentage of Householders to be added to Register.	Number of Householders to be added to Register.
English counties	36	938,344
Scottish counties	47½	194,096
Irish counties	48	376,451
Irish burghs	26	33,757
Total number of householders to be added to register if the constituencies were raised all round to 70 per cent		1,542,648

The above two estimates, though diverging in details, come very near each other in the general result. The householder table is of course more to be relied on, and it tallies fairly well with the most authoritative estimates we have seen elsewhere. Mr R. B. Martin, for in-

stance, calculates that in England and Wales equalisation of the franchise would involve an increase of the county electorate from 932,860 to 1,836,500, or the creation of 903,640 new voters for that one division of the United Kingdom.

When, therefore, Mr Gladstone

estimates the additions to the electorate of England and Wales at 1,300,000, a suspicion suggests itself that the Bill goes beyond the mere equalisation of the county and the borough franchise. If that were its whole scope, it would only create about 900,000 new electors; but the Prime Minister announces frankly in advance that the new creations will be half as large again as that. Are the other 400,000 to result from his new "service franchise"? If so, it will have to be scrutinised much more closely than its innocent-looking nature seemed at first sight to require. With respect to Scotland, our calculations agree very fairly with the Prime Minister's estimate of new electors—namely, about 200,000. But Ireland threatens to be as usual a fertile field of controversy. There is already the greatest diversity of opinion as to what the new Irish electorate may be. Mr Gladstone has estimated the additions to it at 400,000. Mr

Gibson, who should know something of the facts, is confident that they will not be less than 600,000, and the House of Lords' return indicates that they may be even as much as 700,000. Their quality is as dubious as their quantity. Nearly half a million of the inhabited houses in Ireland are valued at less than one pound per annum, and it is evident that these will furnish a considerable number of the new electors. A "rated house" is a very different subject on the two sides of the Channel, and a rating franchise will have a correspondingly different meaning. In a pedantic hunt for verbal equality, Mr Gladstone may be saddling the electorate with practical inequalities, not only absurd, but dangerous. He may be putting the Irish pauper on a level with the intelligent English or Scotch artisan.

On the inhabited-house basis the new constituency would show somewhat like this:—

M.—FORECAST OF THE NEW ELECTORATE, ON THE BASIS OF AN EQUAL BURGH AND COUNTY FRANCHISE.

	Present Electorate.	Voters Added.	New Electorate.
ENGLAND AND WALES—			
Counties . . .	932,860	938,544	1,871,204
Boroughs . . .	1,591,451	...	1,591,451
SCOTLAND—			
Counties . . .	96,870	194,096	290,966
Burghs . . .	201,529	...	201,529
IRELAND—			
Counties . . .	168,217	376,451	544,668
Boroughs . . .	57,497	33,757	91,254
	3,048,424	1,542,648	4,591,072
Service, lodger, and other franchises, say		500,000	500,000
		2,042,648	5,091,072

The addition overhead to the electorate will thus exceed 60 per cent. In England and Scotland it will probably be as high as 50 per cent, and in Ireland it may be anything from 100 to 300 per cent. The new electorate will

number considerably over five millions. It has been shown that the adult male population of the three kingdoms is fully eight millions; consequently 60 per cent of the adult males will have votes— or, deducting paupers, criminals,

&c., say 65 per cent. Future reformers will not have a very long or a very difficult step to take to reach manhood suffrage. The number of householders in the three kingdoms, reckoning one to each inhabited house, with a deduction of 5 per cent for houses vacant at date of enumeration, is, according to the above table, 6,161,700. Only about a fifth of them, therefore, will lack the privilege of a vote, and many of these will be the lady householders for whom Mr Gladstone is sorry he can do nothing at present. To all intents and purposes we shall have household suffrage, and be within measurable distance of manhood suffrage. In spirit, if not in form, manhood will rule, for it will form nearly seven-eighths of the constituency, and little more than one-eighth will be left for education and property. Of the five million electors, there will be at least four millions of working men who pay under 24s. per head per annum to the State for themselves and their families; there will be less than a million living in assessed houses and paying house-duty; there will be less than half a million paying income-tax; and there will be less than fifty thousand with incomes over a thousand a-year. We are not arguing that men with over a thousand a-year must *per se* be better citizens or more intelligent politicians than men with thirty shillings a-week. We are only directing attention to the fact that they are to occupy a very humble place in the new dispensation, except as sources of revenue. Not only is property to have no privileges, no political influence, no special protection, but it may even become politically prejudicial to its owner. The instincts of the great mass of the constituency will favour labour as something opposed

to capital, and requiring to be on its guard against it. The landowner, the capitalist, the large manufacturer, and, to some extent, the professional man, will be made to feel themselves a class apart from the real electors. They will be the smallest fraction of a minority hovering on the skirts of the electoral circle, but not at too great distance for a democratic Government to put its hand in their pockets when a war-tax is needed, or a deficit has to be made good, or a Brummagem election-cry, like the "Free Breakfast-table," has to be paid for.

The county franchise involves, without doubt, disestablishment. It arms Ireland with another weapon for her war on the empire and on civilised society. It foreshadows renewed conflict between labour and capital. It will very probably drive education and intelligence out of politics altogether. It will certainly accelerate the already rapid enough deterioration of the House of Commons. It will, sooner or later, conjure up the dreaded spectre of Socialism; but let us hope that even Birmingham will draw the line there. No one can tell, however. If property be reduced to helplessness, and if it be regarded by a large section of active politicians as a crime, there is no saying how far we may yet go in the direction of Mr Henry George. His day is evidently coming, and that is the darkest as well as the most ominous shadow which the Franchise Bill casts before it. But Mr Gladstone's mechanical majority prefer to take the inevitable leap with their eyes shut, and the Conservative minority content themselves with the polite reflection—"He that will to Cupar, maun to Cupar." Will Lord Salisbury let himself be dragged across the Rubicon? He is the last remaining bulwark of our political future.

ON THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD.

"Two voices are there,—one is of the sea—one of the mountains—each a mighty voice." So Wordsworth; and upon the Arran shore the words are often upon our lips. Seldom elsewhere are the two voices so blended. In Switzerland we have the great white peaks; along the Devon or Cornwall coast the light and sound and darkness of the sea. But there are comparatively few places where the two mighty forces are to be found in intimate union.

"The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;"

and we feel that upon no fitter arena could the great battle of liberty have been fought out. Nature herself in her grandest mood is a witness to the crowning fight between East and West, and the lists have been prepared by other than mortal hands. The sea along a low flat beach is apt to grow wearisome; we tire of the monotony of the everlasting snow. But who can tire of this sea, from which the mountains rise, of these mountains which dip into the sea? The air is soft and delicate, but it has the saltiness of the brine. The myrtle, the fuchsia, the hydrangea, grow to the water's edge; but the dark precipice rises sheerly overhead to where the hardy heather ceases to bloom, and the masterful fir can find no footing. The dismal monotony of English middle-class life has been the burden of Mr Arnold's complaint. A good deal of its sameness is probably due to its surroundings. To us at least there is something absolutely disheartening in being set down for a week in one of the Midland counties. We know all about it;

there is no surprise; the same flat dusty road stretches endlessly before us. To live, on the other hand, in a grand sea and mountain country is a perpetual excitement. The blood flows freely; the spirit is keenly awake. There is a sense of mystery—of infinity. We grow intimate with the great forces which have fashioned the world. We see behind the smooth surface of things, as in a tragedy by a great tragedian—a Sophocles or a Marlowe. We learn what Shelley meant when he said in one of his finest poems—

"The secret strength of things
Which governs thought, and to the
infinite dome
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!"

This, of course, was said of the Alps, and among the Alps the rudimentary and elemental forces that shape the universe are laid bare with a freedom of which we have no experience in our island,—except perhaps when, during a wild Hebridean storm, a billow that has travelled across the Atlantic breaks at our feet. What we see *there* is what the poet calls "the naked countenance of earth"; and the magnificent panorama which he unrolls is drawn, line by line, with faultless decision.

"There many a precipice
Frost and the sun, in scorn of mortal
power,
Have piled; dome, pyramid, and pin-
nacle,
A city of death distinct, with many a
tower
And wall impregnable, of beaming ice."

Shelley's greatness might be staked upon this one early poem, which has been strangely overlooked by his admirers; for the passage through scenes of turbulence and

horror and outrage to the happy meeting-place in the sylvan valley—

“Where one majestic river,
The breath and blood of distant lands,
for ever
Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,
Breathes its swift vapours to the cir-
cling air”—

is as fine as any contrast which English poetry supplies.

Arran is but a little island; yet its interests are not easily exhausted. Scrambling among the ferny and brambly cliffs of Dippen, boating in the bay of Brodick or along the Corriedale shore, climbing the great precipices which stretch behind Goatfell in one unbroken wall for many miles,—day after day we vary our experiences of sea and sky and mountain with startling rapidity. And like the fitfullest of coquettes, our island is never the same. To-day the sky is blue as the sea, and each needle-like peak is articulated stone by stone against the cloudless ether; to-morrow a delicate veil of filmy gauze is drawn lightly across the hills; the day after, a thunder-cloud, rising out of the sea, swiftly advances till it crashes overhead. Then a great darkness settles down upon the inner circle of valley and mountain, out of which come smothered sounds—the thunder rumbling among the distant crags—until at nightfall the storm is spent, and the sun rises once more upon an unclouded sky and a brilliant heaven.

The true fascination of Arran to the mountaineer is in this inner circle of valley and corrie and storm-stained peak, where the raven and the peregrine divide the sky between them, and a stag moving across the sky-line, or bending his antlers over the burn, is the only living creature besides ourselves that invades the solitude; but the belt of fertile land

that lies between the mountain and the sea is not unremarkable. Here your modest cottage is built; here the hazel-nuts and the blackberries are gathered; here are long yellow beaches on which you run your boat; here the ivied crags where the blue “rock” nests and the rabbit burrows. The bold bluffs between Dippen and the old keep of Kildonan are exceptionally picturesque. There are more imposing precipices, no doubt, along the eastern and northern seabords of Scotland; but this has a lavish beauty of its own—an almost tropical splendour and profusion. Colossal pillars clothed with ivy and rising out of green nutty woods—white and pink with black-berry blossom, and yellow with honeysuckle—sparkling with noisy burns that dash down among the big boulders, where the hart’s-tongue hides and the lady-fern spreads fanlike her delicate fronds,—such and so charming are the breezy headlands that look out upon the Atlantic. Along the summit there is smooth velvety sward, with patches of bracken and tufts of purple heather; and a sea blue as sapphire lies below—three hundred feet below. It is a giddy gulf, and the overhanging rocks are apparently quite impracticable; but by-and-by we note where a burn has worn a fissure in the rock, and we watch it falling whitely from ledge to ledge. This is the road to the sea, and a rather ticklish road we find it. Now following the course of the stream—now winding round the face of the cliff—it gradually descends, until about midway it leads us into a dim and vaulted chamber where Oberon and Titania might have held their court. The branches of birch and elm and mountain-ash are interlaced overhead, and underfoot a carpet is spread which no

mortal painter has ventured to render, except in the vaguest and most general terms. That bank of mosses and filmy fern is a study in itself; but—study it as you may—such intricate gradation of brown and green and orange, such incredible delicacy of form and tint, defies the most cunning scribe.

The boating in the bay of Brodick is an inexhaustible pleasure,—though a sailing-boat, to be sure, among these sudden squalls, is a rather ticklish toy. A good deal may be made of an umbrella skilfully adjusted,—we ourselves have thus run round to Lamash in half an hour before a stiff breeze; but then our boat was a mere cockle-shell, which among the big waves looked ridiculously out of place, and it is no good of course unless the wind is dead astern. But upon the whole, there is nothing like the oar, and rowing is one of the pleasantest and healthiest amusements in the world. Then about mid-day (midway in our cruise) we drop the anchor overboard, and plunge into the quiet cove where the salt water is deliciously cool and transparent, and the whole of the sandy bottom is gay with weed and tangle, and spotted urchins, and pink and purple anemones. The bay of Brodick of an autumnal evening, when the splendid range from Ben Noosh to Ben Ghoil—with its sharp serrated edge, the teeth of a monstrous saw—grows lilac against the gold and orange of the sunset, is almost too perfect for any sea north of the Mediterranean. Shelley declares that autumn has more idiomatic character than summer:

“The day becomes more solemn and serene

When noon is past—there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
Which through the summer is not
heard or seen.”

In a sense this is quite true: spring and autumn may be held to represent the morning and evening lights, which elicit far more characteristic effects than the blaze of the noonday sun. The purple twilight upon the Arran mountains—the tender confusion of light on sea and sky—is seen at its best, like the bracken, during the last week of September. What can one say of this wondrous transfiguration of sea and sky and mountain? As we lie in our boat in the middle of the bay, the colour fades, the darkness falls, the glory passes away like a dream. *Here we have no continuing city.* Yet the immense silence and solitude of the night upon the water are wellnigh as impressive. We are in a vast seclusion; the illimitable curtain of night is round about us; and when we return to the shore, to the gleaming lights, and to the cheerful voices, we feel as if we had come out of some great temple into the common street.

It is much to be regretted that there is no Alpine guide-book for Scotland. The Swiss “Baedeker” tells us everything we need to know about the lower Alps; with “Ball” in our knapsack, we may even single-handed venture to attack some of the higher peaks. There is hardly a footpath in the whole country which has not been minutely described by these industrious and enterprising gentlemen. You turn to the left at the group of *châlets*—to the right at the waterfall—and so on till you reach the summit of peak or pass. But the guide-books to the Scotch Highlands stick to the highroads, and are royally ignorant of the short cuts—the kirk-roads and the shepherd-tracks—which traverse our finest and most romantic glens. There are no doubt difficulties in the way. The higher Scotch moun-

tains are in too many cases forbidden ground. The stags that haunt the corries of Ben Wyvis must not be disturbed. The Black Mount is just about as inaccessible as it was in the days of Rob Roy. Gillies are posted upon the peaks; keepers swarm in the glens; Yankee millionaires make a solitude and call it—sport. Still, if a Scotch Alpine Club were to take the matter in hand, a good deal might be done to turn out a creditable Alpine Guide; and this would be the beginning of a better state of matters.

A ridiculous Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr James Bryce, which he calls the "Access to Mountains" Bill, and by which he virtually proposes to make deer-stalking impossible—even in moderation. We are clearly of opinion that compulsory legislation on such a subject cannot be successful, and that the remedy is to be looked for in a quite different direction—viz., in the cultivation of a spirit of mutual goodwill and forbearance, and in the recognition by *Whig* and Tory proprietors alike that fair and rational sport is not promoted by a system of absolute exclusion. (We emphasise the word "*Whig*," for it is well known that it was the over-preservation of game for the market by certain of the great *Whig* magnates that brought about the abrogation of the game-laws as regards shares and rabbits.) We venture to say that almost every point of real interest to the botanist, the geologist, and the Alpine climber in the Highlands, might be voluntarily opened up (of course under reasonable restrictions, which would be cheerfully observed), without doing injury to the sport of the legitimate stalker; and for the Jew or Gentile monopolist who sits in his arm-chair and *pots* the poor

brutes, we have no sympathy whatever.

Last year we were at Kylesku, in Sutherland. We had been fishing at Inchnadamph, and took this roundabout route to Lairg—having accidentally heard that the sea-coast at the Kylesku Ferry was worth seeing. We were not disappointed. These sea-lochs, winding among mountains which rise sheer from the water, are as fine as Norwegian fiords; while to the west a vast sheet of water, studded with green heathery islands, stretches away to the sunset. Few places are more striking—few more secluded and solitary—than the remote boat-house where we spent the night. We had meant to go on to Scourie; but we had satisfied ourselves by a careful study of the map that there must be a direct track across the mountains,—although no path was shown, and the guide-books were dumb. On questioning an old Celt who was drying his nets on the loch-side, we learnt that our surmise was correct—there *was* a track which led right through the wildest part of the Duke's forest to Loch More. It was never used except by the Duke's people, but it was free to all—an old kirk-road that could not be stopped. It is indeed a grand road, as we found next morning—a serene cloudless morning after a night's rain—the views, as it mounts the hillside, of Lochs Glendhu and Glencoul, being magnificent, and the descent upon Loch More nearly as striking.

Kylesku is out of the way; but even among the Arran mountains the climber is forced to trust very much to his own mountaineering instincts. The guide-books are silent, or at most take you up Goatfell, where a guide is a superfluity and an encumbrance. It does not matter very much to the

resident who has a month or two to spare; but to the climber who is pressed for time, the absence of any sort of authoritative information often proves a serious hardship. It may be admitted, on the other hand, that the excitement of exploring an unknown country is considerable compensation for an occasional mishap among the mountains. Many hard things have been said of the Duke of Hamilton, and the Glasgow and Paisley "bodies" are particularly anxious to have the island "opened up," as they call it—that is to say, divided among themselves. Their notions of opening it up are not exactly those which a true lover of nature would be inclined to endorse; to exchange the pleasant pastoral life of the homely farmhouse for the vulgar racket of a second-rate watering-place would be decidedly an exchange for the worse. For our part, we are thankful that the Duke has had the courage to resist the clamour that has been raised because he declines to parcel out his island among Glasgow cotton lords and Renfrewshire coalmasters, and has preserved, within sight of these vast hives of labour and sorrow, a virginal and unpolluted soil. For the Arran mountains are as free as the air,—having climbed nearly every peak, we do not remember to have met keeper or gillie in all our wanderings. This aristocratic "exclusiveness" may contrast favourably or unfavourably with the "liberality" which these urban and suburban critics would no doubt develop if it were cut up into "allotments," and dotted all over with staring villas and Chinese pagodas; but the simple folk who, like ourselves, find solace and refreshment in a simple and natural life, will be content to leave the Duke in possession for the present. When the

land is "nationalised" it will be time enough to consider how far the new arrangements have added to the sum of enjoyment which the nation at large derives from Lowland strath and Highland muir. In the meantime, it is enough for us to know that though red-deer and grouse and black-cock are as common as blackberries, and though the Duke and his friends are ardent sportsmen, yet no sort of impediment is placed in the way of the naturalist, the artist, or the mountaineer, who may wander at will from peak to peak and from corrie to corrie.

The Hamiltons were never popular in Scottish history; there has been a want of frankness, a want of veracity, in their dealings with prince and people, and a strain of alien blood in their veins, which in private as in public life made itself felt. "A kindly Scot lies here," is a motto that might be assumed by many of the great Scotch houses,—hardly by the Hamiltons. But the present Duke is well liked; and if he would only stay a little longer each year among his own people, there is not a man in the island who would not be ready to say—as we have said before—"May his shadow never grow less!"

With an Ordnance map of the island in one pocket, a small aneroid in another, and a good field-glass slung at our side—to say nothing of flask and sandwiches—we are ready for a mountain scramble; and—as we are now well into September—the earlier we start the better, for the days are shorter than they were, and the nights darker and chillier. We may start either from Brodick, Corrie, or Sannox; for the mountain region is most conveniently entered by one or other of the great glens that open upon the sea in the immediate vicinity of these favourite hamlets. But a word, before starting, upon

the characteristics of the singular group, on one of whose far-off peaks, before the day is done, we mean to sit—"as on a throne."

The higher peaks are all to be found in the northern part of the island, and within a comparatively narrow circle. From Ben Noosh¹ to Goatfell is not more than three miles as the crow flies. There are, speaking broadly, two great ranges running parallel to each other, but separated by the deep valleys of Sannox and Rosa. The outer or Goatfell range rises straight from the narrow belt of fertile land round the sea,—the inland range comprises Ben Noosh, Ben Tarsheen, and Cashtelábel. The valleys which separate these ranges are profound and precipitous; but at their junction a gigantic bastion projects from the inland range at right angles into the glens,—this is Keer Vhor, which rises with astonishing boldness, like a shattered dolomite, from either valley. The inland ridge is in fact a gigantic wall, some 2500 feet above the valleys, but attaining at various points a still higher altitude—Ben Tarsheen being 2706 feet above the sea, and Cashtelábel 2735. Two passes, known to the shepherds, cross this prodigious wall,—one to the north of Tarsheen, called the Archer's Pass (in the Gaelic, Bealach an Fhir-bhogha), being a true col, and another a mere sheep-track—between A' Keer and Keer Vhor. These are all; and as, by this route, Ben Noosh is at least ten miles from Sui Ferghas, it is obvious that the range is of quite unusual steepness and inaccessi-

bility, and admirably suited to test the skill of the adventurous mountaineer. The Goatfell range is easily ascended, especially from the Brodick side; but as the views, until the summit is reached, are comparatively tame and uninteresting—all the greater peaks being shut out by a clumsy shoulder of the mountain—the ascent has little to recommend it.²

Our route to-day lies up the Rosa Valley. Yesterday we had been on Ben Noosh and Ben Tarsheen: leaving the String road at its highest point, we had crossed the upper moors to Ben Noosh, had kept along the *arête* to Ben Tarsheen, and had then descended by the Archer's Pass and the Garbh Allt (where there is a pretty waterfall) to the level of the valley. To-day Keer Vhor and Cashtelábel are the heights for which we are bound, and to reach them we must traverse the whole length of Glen Rosa.

A week ago (we may here confess—parenthetically) we had been beaten back from Keer Vhor. We had then attempted to ascend from the "Saddle"—the ridge which, at the junction of the valleys, and at a height of about 1500 feet, joins Keer Vhor to Goatfell. From the "Saddle" the towers of the "Great Comb" rise more than 1000 feet overhead. We did not find much difficulty for some time: it was a stiff climb, no doubt, and in dry weather the patches of grass may become dangerously slippery; but we quickly reached the more level ground from which the crowning towers—there are three of them

¹ We give for convenience the Gaelic names as they are pronounced; but the reader will keep in view that Ben Noosh should be spelt Beinn Nuis—Keer Vhor, Cir Mohr,—and so on.

² On the other hand, the descent from Goatfell to the Saddle is sometimes rather ticklish—especially when the gravel-slopes have been loosened by continuous rain; and local tradition has it that Professor Huxley and party, having missed their way, once came to rather serious grief on one of these nasty inclines.

—spring. A mass of enormous boulders bars the way, but by following what is possibly a rarely used shepherd's track, a break in the rampart is found, up which it is possible to scramble—hoisting one's self between the boulders—not without difficulty. The lower of the towers is now easily gained, and from its summit we get a complete view of the last and highest—which is here close at hand. It is a sheer precipice falling without a break into the great Cash-telábel corrie, more than 2000 feet below. The ascent does not look inviting; the autumn day is waning, and we must be clear of the Rosa Valley, with its treacherous pitfalls, before the night comes down upon us. So leaving our coigne of vantage, we rapidly cross the stony hollow that lies between the two peaks, and begin the final scramble. But it is soon obvious that success on this occasion is not to attend our efforts. This central tower, for 200 feet at least, is well-nigh perpendicular. We had satisfied ourselves with the glass that there was only one possible route, and *that* well to the left; whereas, while creeping warily across the polished and slippery granite, we find that we are being gradually pressed to the *right*—to the sheer precipice over the Cashtelábel corrie. We pause; we give a longing glance at the summit, not many yards overhead; then a glance at our watch—it is past five, we find—just two hours of daylight; and thereupon, recognising that discretion is the better part of valour, we admit that we are beaten, and hurry down as best we can into the darkening valley.

It may be possible to ascend Keer Vhor from the Saddle; but, so far as we can ascertain, the ascent has not yet been made.

To-day we mean to try it from the other side.

The walk up the Rosa Valley from Brodick is always delightful. It is the portal to a new world whose marvels never stale. The sun shines brilliantly; the pine-woods are fragrant; the limpid stream in its granite bed sparkles like champagne. We leave the track to Sannox about half-way up the valley, and begin the ascent. Just as we are crossing one of the innumerable burns, we observe a slight movement among the bracken, and a creature the colour of the bracken moves majestically out from among the rocks and raises its antlered head. It is a big stag—one of the leaders of the herd which are feeding high overhead. He watches us for a little, then turns away with careless freedom, and walks slowly up to join his companions. A few minutes later, on a grassy knoll among boulders, we come upon two hinds and a fawn. They are feeding greedily, and do not notice us. Then an old cock-grouse on an adjacent hillock, who had been watching us with both his eyes, crows lustily; the hinds cease feeding, and stand for a moment motionless—for a moment only; in another, with the fawn at their heels, they are out of sight behind the rocks. We skirt the base of the inaccessible precipices of A' Keer, and by a gradual ascent reach the high corrie which lies between A' Keer and Keer Vhor. The corrie, we find, is about the height of the Saddle—1500 feet. Here are some enormous granite boulders; we measure one roughly by pacing round it—it is 36 yards in circumference, as nearly as we can guess. The wall that runs from A' Keer to Keer Vhor is hardly so steep as we had anticipated; and with the help of the glass we make

sure that there is a rough track to the summit—the summit of the prolonged wall which, as we have said, runs from Ben Noosh to Sui Ferghas. A leisurely ascent brings us in another half-hour to the top. Up here it is blowing a gale, and we keep our feet with difficulty. A pack of grouse sweep past, and the wail of “the plaintive creatures who pity themselves on moorlands” is heard all about the valley at our feet. The *whaups* have been sheltering themselves from the storm among the stones that are strewn thickly about, and our unlooked-for advent has driven them from their shelter. No wonder that they are querulous! That pitiful complaint always seems to us to translate into articulate sound the essential sentiment of the lonely places which curlew and plover haunt—the echo, as it were, of winter winds and rains upon corrie and sea-beach and mountain-side. Keer Vhor is now close at hand, and if the hurricane does not sweep us away into empty space, will be ours within the hour. Cashtelábel is further off, and a pile of granite slabs—millions of tons—has yet to be traversed *en route*; but Cash-telábel, too, is obviously accessible from this side. Our flank movement, in short, has been attended with complete success.

Even from here the view is superb; but we cannot afford to linger. It is a stiff pull up the grassy slope, but nothing more. Prodigious slabs of grey granite, fringed with blackberries and mountain-ferns, bar the way; but they are easily circumvented. The northern tower is already under foot; and before we have at all realised that our task is over (for our aneroid, showing a rise of not more than 2500 feet from the Brodick shore, does not confirm the figures [2618] of the Ordnance

people), we are lying at full length upon the storm-beaten slab that caps the central peak. There is nothing before us, nothing above us, nothing round about us, save empty air, and the hurricane which sweeps past us like an actual presence—the invisible Spirit of the Storm.

As a coigne of vantage, Keer Vhor is not surpassed by any of its rivals. Its unique position—midway between the two great ranges—gives it indeed an absolute pre-eminence. There are a dozen first-rate peaks, each of them extraordinarily bold, sharp, and abrupt, within three miles of us as the crow flies. The high corries that lie between them are dark and deep. Into some of them the sun never shines; and out of them, even on the fairest day of summer, the vapour streams like smoke. This immense battlement—thrown out, as it were, against some Titanic foe—is fringed along the summit with granite boulders, which assume the most fantastic shapes—the likeness of an umbrella held against the wind being one of the most grotesque. For it is all granite up here (we noticed the junction of the granite and the slate at various points on the way); and unpolished granite, when exposed to the action of the air, corrodes like steel in an acid. But it is not the near view only that is fine; between the weather-stained peaks the spaces of blue sea and green peninsula and sunny island present the most charming pictures. Set in a frame of deep red granite, sky and sea acquire a peculiar and unusual delicacy of tone. The distant view, indeed, is almost illimitable. We have Rathlin and the Antrim coast, and the wild Atlantic from Ireland to Islay, and the Paps of Jura, and Ben More in Mull, and

Cantyre, lying between its two seas, blue on either hand; and then, away to the north and east, past Lochfyne and Bute and the sunny vistas of the Clyde, the great Highland range from Cruachan to the Cobbler.

On the summit, however, it is impossible to linger, and after some hurried sketching lower down, we hasten on to Cashtelábel—the highest peak save one in the island. To go from the one peak to the other, it is necessary to skirt the profound gulf that lies between the two. Were it not for the piled-up rubbish of millions of years, which has been cast out here as into one vast “toom”—the stony fragments of some primeval crash—

“Confusedly hurled
The fragments of an earlier world”—

there would be no difficulty whatever. As it is, we must walk warily over the enormous slabs that lie propped against each other upon the mountain-side. All the surroundings here are of the highest order. Nowhere else does the tame and orderly world from which we have risen seem more remote. The veil that hides the weird solitudes and majestic forces of nature has been withdrawn; we are permitted to gaze on “the naked countenance of earth.” Either peak of Cashtelábel—it is a double peak—is easily ascended; and here, as at Ben Tarsheen, “Cyclopean architecture” is found at its best. This immense “castle” is built as the inferior castles of men are built. Stone is laid upon stone with mechanical uniformity. We can see the mason at his work,—can understand how the massive tower was reared, and rose from tier to tier. It is in such a place that the Titans become credible. It is easier to believe that these

blocks were fitted in and adjusted to each other by intelligent builders, of more than mortal mould indeed, yet framed and fashioned like ourselves,—it is easier to believe this than to believe that some blind natural force brought them together.

From Cashtelábel three routes may be followed. The range which forms the northern side of North Glen Sannox leads down to the Loch Ranza road. A narrow and difficult track runs along the summit of the ridge which connects Cashtelábel with Sui Ferghas. And finally, there is the Glen Rosa route, which we have taken to-day, and by which, being pressed for time, we return. It is indeed a race against time: we are still on the top of the great wall when the fires of the sunset light up the Atlantic, and ere we finish the descent into the valley, the last ruddy ray has died off Goatfell. The moon rises as we reach the Garbh Allt bridge, and while we skirt the wood it gleams larger and redder through the darkness of the pines. That low-lying valley, with its doubtful moonlight, is very lonely. A plover or a whaup rises from the stream with plaintive cry; we hear the crow of a cock-pheasant as he settles to roost; up Glen Shiant a stag is bellowing. All night, at intervals, these sad cries will be heard,—all night when we are abed, and the stars only look down upon the valley. The vision of some nocturnal prowler perhaps startles them in their dreams—the owl flitting past in the moonlight, the weasel creeping out of the sedge, the mountain-fox stealing softly from cover to cover.

In one respect only is Arran incomplete and imperfect. The English passion for the chase which has been embodied in the

memorable words, "It's a fine day; let us go and kill something," cannot be gratified by the passing visitor. There is no fishing worth speaking of, and the red-deer are of course reserved for the ducal rifle. The keepers indeed must have a fine time of it, and the grouse at least appear to be mainly encouraged for their entertainment. To a man with a taste for sport, one would say that the office of head-keeper in an island like this is a dignity to be eagerly coveted. And if he should happen to be a bit of a naturalist, or member of an Alpine Club, we are not sure that he would be a happier man (but quite the reverse) if he had a gift of the island in fee-simple. Yet we should not wonder if John Mactavish, with some pet grievance that he hugs in secret, does not in the least realise that he is the luckiest man not in Arran only, but in the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland. Such and so false are the estimates that we form of our lot in life, that it is quite possible the honest Highlander may fancy that the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Lord Chancellor of England has drawn a bigger prize in the big lottery.

There are islands, however, not far distant which will satisfy the aspirations of the most "blood-guilty" sportsman, and to which one or other of Mr MacBrayne's excellent steamers will convey him in the course of a few hours,—

"Ulva dark and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round."

After a few weeks spent among the seals and ducks and sea-trout of the outlying islands, he will return to the bright and pleasant life upon the Arran shore with fresh zest,—prepared to acquiesce

in the arrangements of Providence which require him to regard the Duke's grouse with a purely platonic passion. On such adventure we are now bound: an ornithological friend has asked us to procure for his collection the skin of one of the great seals which on the west coast are known as Tapists, along with a merganser, and a pair of eider ducks; and we know besides of a snug little hostelry which has a famous trout-loch at the door, and another not many miles distant where sea-trout abound. These islands we have solemnly vowed never to name in print, and our readers must be content with such indication of the localities as a liberal translation from the native tongue may serve to convey to them. The one is the Island of the Sea Trout, the other the Island of the Eider Duck.

The Island of the Eider Duck lies well out in the Atlantic; and except the Dhu Heartech light-house, there is nothing, so far as we know, between it and Newfoundland. A boat comes off to the steamer; our traps are hoisted over; and we let go the rope, figurative and literal, that binds us to the mainland. For another week we might as well be in another planet. It is upon the whole an invigorating experience. It does us good to learn that we can live without the 'Times' and the 'Glasgow Herald,' and that civilisation, after all, is only a bad habit which we may expect to outgrow. We have managed somehow to get into the rut, and anything like intellectual independence is unknown among us. Everybody talks, for instance, as if the descent down the easy incline that leads to democracy were irresistible and inevitable; and yet we have only to shake ourselves free of the busybodies of the streets to discover that it is a passing

fashion only, and that there is no absolute necessity in the matter. We babble just now about the county franchise, electoral districts, and the ballot-box—as if these fads were somehow bound up with the immutable laws of the universe; yet to another age they will be mere empty words, without vitality or significance—like the theological phrases of the middle ages, which, having once deluged Europe with blood, are as dead to us as the politics of the Pharaohs and the shibboleths of the Pharisees. There is nothing like cutting ourselves adrift from the mainland for a week or two, if we wish to learn how little in our intellectual environment and social standards is essential—how easily we can dispense with the niceties and refinements and dexterities which are mainly distinctive of modern life—how the daily newspaper, and the telegraph, and the railway, and the parliamentary debate, and the caucus, are mere excrescences which have not added anything to the true happiness and virtue of mankind, and might be swept away again without reducing their sum. So, when our gloomy friends assure us that the Monarchy is on its last legs, we are content to reply—The whole horizon may change to-morrow. Democracy is as much a caprice as Mormonism, and Joseph Chamberlain has as much to do with the appointed seasons of the universe as Joe Smith. You are bewitched by the spell of custom and familiarity; but open your eyes, stretch out your arms, break your bonds, and the enchantment will vanish with the mist.

The eider duck, after the wild swan, is probably the finest bird that frequents the Atlantic seaboard. They nest all about the island, especially among the long heather and reedy inlets of the

eastern coast. The great precipices on which the Atlantic breaks are too steep and perilous, and the young birds, new from the nest, could hardly weather that tempestuous sea. From their earliest days, it is true, they are splendid sailors. When they grow older they grow somewhat unwieldy, and are not difficult to shoot on the water; but the half-fledged bird is splendidly supple, and seems to dive with the flash. In clear shallow bays we can see the little downy morsels oaring themselves swiftly a foot or two under water, and when forced to the surface, showing only the tips of their bills. At this season the family is under the maternal wing,—the drake, till well on in autumn, leaving his consort to her own resources. Meantime the male birds keep together, and are found quite on the other side of the island, in parties of a dozen or a score. Why they should manifest such selfish unconcern for their offspring, at a season when one would fancy that their services were most required, we do not know, but the fact is undoubted. We hunted about the bays of the eastern coast; and though they were dotted all over with little family groups in brown, the brilliant white of the drake was conspicuous by its absence. A day or two later the anomaly was explained: running round to Eilana-Rhoan before a sharp breeze, we surprised a company of a dozen drakes fully a mile from the shore, and well out of the way of the “blind rollers,” which even on the stillest day of summer thunder whitely along the Atlantic shore. These “blind rollers” are rather unaccountable: the sea may be smooth as glass, unruffled by wind or tide, when on a sudden a monstrous wave, rising up in the middle of the bay, breaks with mist

of foam and cataract roar on the frail cobble of the unwary fisher. Some hidden energy that has been generated by the Gulf Stream in its long Atlantic voyage may thus unpleasantly and unexpectedly disclose itself; but whatever its cause, the phenomenon is exceptionally striking and impressive—reminding us of the thunder in a cloudless sky which Lord Herbert of Cherbury took for a sign.

The ragged reefs that lie to the south form an archipelago which bears a curious resemblance to the Venetian lagoon. This group of islands, on the largest of which the scrubby vegetation serves to support a few scraggy sheep—most of them, however, being bare rock on which no blade of grass can grow—are separated by deep and narrow channels—the canals of Venice?—through which twice a-day the Atlantic ebbs and flows. They can hardly, indeed, be more desolate or lonely than the dreary mud-banks on which the fugitives from the Italian mainland found shelter, and from which their wonderful city rose like an exhalation. Here, too, relics of an ancient civilisation are to be found—Gothic arches, crosses of exquisite finish and design; for the missionary genius of the Church had invaded these perilous seas, and held its own against Scandinavian reiver and native cateran. But to-day the solitude is unbroken—only some black bullet-heads rise and sink noiselessly as the boat threads the channel from one land-locked bay to another.

The owners of the black heads belong to the smaller variety of *Phoca*—the *Phoca vitulina*. The great seals congregate about the outermost reef—Cann-riva—which is still a mile ahead, separated from us by what may be called the Grand Canal—a spacious inland sea. The

field-glass is taken out; and sure enough, the unshapely grey objects that lie prone upon the brown tangle prove to be the game of which we are in search—a creature about as big and strong as a sea-horse. The Tapists are comparatively rare: this is one of their favourite haunts, and all told, they do not number a dozen, whereas the common seals are to be reckoned by hundreds. A plan of operations is agreed upon: we land one of our party on the other side of the reef, shove the boat into a narrow inlet, and await the result of the stalk. The sportsman steals across the rock still well within shot. Then there is a puff of smoke and a sharp report, and the great beasts scuttle with marvellous rapidity into the water. When we arrive at the scene of action, we find the water round the place where they had dived red with blood, which continues to rise in copious streams from the bottom—a sure sign that the express-rifle and the explosive bullet had done their work. But it is long before we can hook up the enormous brute. Again and again he slips back into the deep water. At last by a united effort he is hauled on board, and we get a fair look at him. A fierce and villanous-looking customer indeed,—his great tusks being worn white and sharp with age and hard fighting and the vicissitudes of amphibious life in these stormy northern seas.

Another day we are driven across sandy bents to Ardsinish—a long yellow beach, bent like a bow, with granite rocks outside and blue water between. A lovely bay!—facing the Atlantic, but sheltered from its billows by the intervening reefs. This is the favourite resort of the common seal; and when we reach the summit of the vast sand-hills

by which it is enclosed, we see them lying thickly about in all directions—on black rock and yellow sand. For half an hour or so we watch them through the glass, and so pretty a sight it would be hard to match. There is a sort of clumsy playfulness about the simple-looking creatures when they take to the land which is irresistibly comic. Murdoch engages to convey us within shot. But somehow we would rather leave them undisturbed; for after watching them at their elephantine gambols it is impossible not to feel friendly. They look indeed so much nicer and cleaner and happier than most of our fellow-mortals! As it turns out, we find less cover than Murdoch had expected, and before we are fairly within shot they are all under water. The seal, however, is as inquisitive as a woman, and Murdoch opines that they will have another squint at us before they finally retire. So we are stowed away among the big stones which the tide has left bare; and sure enough—though at first well out of shot—the bullet heads begin to show upon the surface, and with keen inquisition follow the keeper in his Parthian retreat from the shore. Soon they grow bolder, and at length one bolder than the rest rises well within shot—gazing about him with an expression of deprecatory appeal in his brown eyes which is like to disarm us. But Murdoch, we know, would scorn our weakness; and we console ourselves with the reflection that it is a hundred to one against the bullet in this case finding its billet,—an “outer” or even a “centre” here being of no use whatever. Alas! it goes straight to the mark with altogether unaccountable directness, and the red circle upon the water widens and

widens, until it is too plainly evident that the pretty innocent victim must be stretched, dead as Julius Cæsar, along the bottom. How and by what means (there being no boat at hand) the body was recovered need not here be told; but we suspect that among the lone shielings of the misty island the legend of the wild huntsman who in a state of quite primitive nudity dragged the monster ashore, will not be soon forgotten.

This is hardly the time or place for controversy, yet ere we leave the islands where crofters most do congregate, we are tempted to ask, What mean the tears which have been so cheaply and copiously shed by sentimental politicians and their friends? It has been conclusively proved that the Gaelic sympathiser who went all the way to Sutherland to drop a tear or two over the Deserted Village, did it on the wrong side of the stream; but is not his misadventure a highly characteristic comment upon the unreal and artificial nature of the agitation which a few charlatans and their dupes have succeeded in raising? “Ah! and had ye a goot funeral?” asked the old man in Glenelg, when his sons returned from the ceremony. “And had ye plenty to eat and drink?” “Yes, plenty.” “And had ye a goot fight?” “No, no, there was no fighting.” “Ah,” sighed the veteran, “there are no men nowadays.” The complaint from the lips of the old hillman was unquestionably sincere, but the spectacle of an advanced Radical lamenting the “good old times” is one that gods and men must contemplate with astonishment. The good old times! Why, the good old times which an unfortunate and much-to-be-pitied Royal Com-

mission¹ are expected to restore (of course they can't; but what a deal of bad blood they have stirred! what a number of cruel calumnies they have aired!) were about the very worst times in our history of which we have record. Anything more sordid, filthy, and squalid than the life led by the Hebridean Celt up to the middle of last century, it would be hard to match. How human beings were able to exist at all under such conditions, is a mystery that remains to be explained; and comfort, cleanliness, decency, self-respect, were of course out of the question. We know what the Highlands and Islands, even at their very worst, are now; but the demagogue and the busybody will not take the trouble to ascertain—though ample materials exist—what they were in the past. Select an island such as this—where the population has been wisely kept within reasonable limits, and the miserable creatures have not been encouraged to breed, like rabbits in a warren, without any thought of the future,—take such an island, and the comparison between what was and what is, between the past and the present, must be abundantly instructive. If our readers will look into any

of the books to which we refer—*e.g.*, 'Description of the Western Isles of Scotland,' by Donald Munro, High Dean of the Isles: an 'Account of Hirta and Rona,' by Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat; Martin's 'Description of the Western Islands' (1703); Buchan's 'Description' (1773)—they can easily satisfy themselves that the statements we make are not overdrawn. An island which is now fairly prosperous, was for ages scourged by famine and swept by pestilence; strange and horrible maladies afflicted a population ignorant of every sanitary law and beyond the reach of medical science; the mind was brutalised by the grossest superstition, the body stunted by hunger and disease; witchcraft flourished, agriculture did not exist; the life led was to all intents and purposes the life that is led by savages. Savage life under the warm tropical sun is endurable enough; savage life in a bleak and barren island, where the elements are unfriendly and the soil poor, is about as miserable an existence as it is possible to imagine.

Carlyle, in one of his dyspeptic moods, roundly abuses the Highlander and the soft liquid inflections of his speech—"that accursed

¹ The Record of the Commission—a portentous and prodigious document of several thousand pages in five bulky volumes—has been printed since this article was in type. While the narrative and expository part of the Report is upon the whole accurate and reasonable, the suggestions and recommendations with which it concludes (when they are not the merest commonplace) are whimsical to a degree. The connection between the two is so extremely shadowy, indeed, that we are led to conclude that the Commissioners evolved their legislative proposals out of their own consciousness, and without any regard to the facts which they hold to be established. After showing with perfect lucidity that the alleged grievances (which form the stock-in-trade of the Highland outrage-monger) do not exist, they go on to suggest remedies for these visionary grievances, puerile in themselves, but disastrous in the large consequences they involve, and the far-reaching questions they open up. It is a Report which only theorists and political dreamers could have sanctioned; and it is satisfactory to find that the chimerical and fantastic scheme to restore a Celtic Utopia is repudiated by the representative Celts on the Commission—Sir Kenneth Mackenzie and Cameron of Lochiel. A better and closer piece of political reasoning than Lochiel's "Memorandum" has seldom been written.

Celtic accent which I never yet heard associated with any manly or profitable thought or sentiment, which to me is but the symbol of Highland vanity, and filth, and famine." This is one side of the picture—that there is another we all gladly admit. But the morbid sentimentality which would exempt the Celt from the operation of all economic law is childish in the extreme, and goes far to explain the violent antipathy which the irascible philosopher felt and expressed at times.

"From the lone shieling on the misty island

Mountains divide us and a world of seas ;

But still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,

And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

Fair these broad meads, these hoary woods are grand,

But we are exiles from our father's land."

The "lone shieling on the misty island" was one of the most wretched holes on God's earth. Whereas the Canadian Celt, into whose mouth the words are put by the poet, has a decent house over his head, is thriving, industrious, enterprising ; and it is the merest folly to compare the substantial farmer of the New World with the lazy, ragged, half-clad, thoughtless squatter, who smokes his pipe all day beside his undrained and unweeded potato-patch, and sighs for the return of the good old times of filth and squalor.

Our week in the Island of the Eider Duck is over, and the steamer is again in the offing. Over a placid moonlight sea we are carried smoothly in the course of a few hours to the Island of the Sea-trout ; and for the past ten days our clever landlady has made us as comfortable as possible in the

homely little tavern, which lies so close to the sea that during high tides the salt water comes up to the hall-door. But alas ! for the first forty-eight hours the rain it rained every day, and every minute of every day. Such a wild burst of rain and wind as followed our peaceful voyage has seldom been known during early autumn, even in the Island of the Sea-trout—which is proverbially wet and windy. Four times a-day before dinner did we retire to the stable to smoke a meditative pipe ; twenty times a-day did we open the front door and gaze helplessly upon the heavy-laden clouds that drifted up from Ben More in endless procession. Even the low-country shepherd was at last forced to admit that there was something more than "a bit mist" on the hill. It was "weet—weet." So hopeless, indeed, did the prospect become, that ultimately we were driven to—read.

There has been much discussion about the kind of literature we should take with us to the country. All the books without which no gentleman's library is complete must of course be scrupulously avoided. It is physically impossible to convey your copy of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' ; and many a novel in three volumes is just as heavy. A good deal may be said for the cheap translations of Gaboriau's romances, which, as we know from the publisher's advertisement, form Prince Bismarck's favourite reading ; but the type is trying to the strongest eyes. A few hours may be profitably devoted to 'The Sportsman's Guide' ; but, unlike the witch of old Nile, even the 'Sportsman's Guide' is not inexhaustible : besides, there was only one copy in the inn, and the competition after breakfast for the favourite manual was so ex-

cessive, that sometimes it was not available till well on in the afternoon. (It was rumoured in the coffee-room that one of our companions in adversity took it with him to bed—an unfair advantage that would have been resented if the weather had not cleared.) A friend had recommended us to try tentatively one or other of the Books of Extracts from our great writers—Thackeray, Ruskin, Landor, Browning, George Eliot—which are now so common, and which are easily packed and easily carried. We can hardly say that the experiment was successful. An author must indeed be a tremendously big fellow who can stand this iconoclastic treatment without suffering injury—internal or external. The maxims of Joubert are inimitable. They are as clean-cut as cameos. But there is only one Joubert, and he was a Frenchman. Our English writers have not the art of compression. They cannot condense. The “extractor” who looks for a fitting pause in the “spate” of Mr Ruskin’s eloquence may be compared to the rustic who stood on the bank of the river, and who is probably standing there still. Even the mellow wisdom of Thackeray loses something of its *curiosa felicitas* when divorced from the context. Thackeray was a true artist; and it is wonderful how the little bit of humorous cynicism, of sudden pathos, fits into and illustrates the narrative. But when the delicate morsel is cut out, and stuck, as a butterfly is stuck, on a pin, to be coldly regarded by critics who have not been warmed by the fire of the story, a certain thinness and poverty appear which had not struck us before. Let us not be misunderstood. ‘Vanity Fair’ is not the less a great book because the separate bricks of which it is composed do not admit of displace-

ment; on the contrary, it may be said quite truly that the less quotable a book is, the higher must have been the art of the author. The perfect manner of Thackeray, its high-bred ease and familiarity, is not his least charm; and after all, it was more his way of saying a thing than the thing said that was memorable. Landor and Matthew Arnold fare better,—they polish their epigrams, and their speculation has a distinctive flavour: yet we say again—There is but one Joubert; and whoever assures you that Thackeray or Ruskin or Arnold taken in thin slices or homœopathic globules will stay the intellectual appetite, and carry you victoriously through a wet day in the Highlands,—trust him not—he is fooling thee.

After mature consideration our own opinion is, that the right kind of book for the sportsman and naturalist in such circumstances is that which may be described as an idealised and transcendental version of the ‘Sportsman’s Guide.’ Walton and Cotton and Gilbert White are somewhat out of date; but they have had worthy successors, and St John’s ‘Muckle Hart of Benmore,’ or Mr Colquhoun’s experiences on Moor and Loch, may be read again and again. The sumptuous edition of St John by George Reid is a book for a palace; but there are handy editions which can go into the pocket of a shooting-coat, and no more delightful companion for moor or loch is to be met with in this indifferent world. Within the past year, indeed, two unpretending volumes on natural history and sport have been written by keen observers living in the Highlands—‘Benderloch’ and ‘Nether Lochaber’—really admirable in their way, and deserving to be better known than they appear to be.

These are the sort of men who are the salt of the earth. When we think of the number of quite unsubstantial fallacies and euphemistic sophisms which the necessities of party conflict and political life have forced Mr Gladstone (for instance) to ventilate during the past fifty years, when we think how any one opinion appears to be just as capable of eloquent defence as any other, we are grateful to men who have at least an inch or two of solid ground for their feet, and who can tell us with absolute certainty that a tadpole is a tadpole now and always, and cannot by any expansiveness of rhetoric be translated into a tomtit. A humble lesson, it may be, yet still in many ways reassuring to those of us who have been led to believe that in morals and politics black may be white, and white black.

At last—at last—there is a break in the clouds,—Ben More and the Ardnamurchan peaks have been fitfully visible since daybreak: the flooded river is unworkable, indeed, but the lochs must be in fine trim. To-day Loch Tanna is our destination—to-morrow Loch Dhu. As we climb the hillside the rain-clouds roll away, and John assures us that we are in for a spell of fine weather. The fisherman's "fine day" is not indeed the "fine day" of the ordinary mortal; but a light breeze and an occasional cloud are all that he needs on Loch Tanna, where, after rain, the trout are in high spirits and greedy as gleds. Your "cast" has been exhaustively studied during these days of enforced idleness—drake's-wing with claret body, a Zulu, and a worm-fly—and you are ready for action the moment the boat throws off.

The trout rise well for an hour or two, and it is clear they mean work. No-dallying or coquetting, but a clean, swift run at the fly,

and it is your own fault if they don't hook. The first "rise" of the season, especially if the trout be of fair size, is always an event. The little ripple on the water, the gentle pressure on the line, until you give the artistic turn of the wrist (mostly overdone, we fancy), and a good half-pounder is bending your light trout-rod, in a frantic effort to outwit you. On Loch Tanna, leisurely drifting before the wind, not far from the shore—for they lie upon the shingly bottoms, close to the reeds—you may easily kill your three dozen of choice trout,—game little fellows, who run till they are dead-beat, and who are red as Lochleveners when placed on the table. Get your landlady to give you half-a-dozen at supper—split open, and done hastily with pepper and salt in the frying-pan—for next morning they are comparatively dry and tasteless. No one knows what a Loch Tanna trout is unless it be cooked within a few hours of its capture. Full of juice, the pink flesh comes away from the bone in creamy flakes—a toothsome morsel. The wind dies away towards evening, and we put up our rods, with six dozen in the boat,—fair trout all, though none are up to the pound. The Loch Tanna trout, as a rule, run two or three to the pound; and though there are sea-trout in the loch, they are seldom taken—the only one we hooked to-day throwing himself cleverly off the hook, after a smart run. The light rod and the small flies are hardly a match for this rapid and dashing fish.

The walk home in the still twilight through the upland moors—with the Ben More peaks reflecting from across the valley the Atlantic sunset—is full of charm.

Loch Dhu is an ideal loch. It is only a mile from the sea, and swarms with salmon and sea-trout;

but it winds among the deep valleys of Ben More, and on a blustering day the gusts from the mountains sweep it from end to end. For sea-trout and salmon, so long as the boat can live, you cannot choose too wild a day. It is blowing half a gale as we push off, and the men have hard work to round the headlands. We pick up a few white trout the size of large herrings on our way; but the big fish lie further up. Off Salmon Point a monster throws himself bodily out of the water. A hungry fish, we are told, and the boat is allowed to drift before the wind to the spot where he rose. At the first cast he goes straight at the fly, and before we know that he is fast, the line is spinning off the reel, and he is making for the middle of the loch. After the first wild burst, the pace slackens, and we are able to get him in hand. We are landed at the point, and slowly and carefully we force him into the sandy shallows. There Alister watches his chance, and a five-pound trout is safely in the landing-net. The sea-trout is, to our mind, the king of fishes: brisk and dashing by nature, he never sulks like the salmon, but fights with undaunted spirit—now at the bottom, now on the surface—till the game is up, and the gaff in his gills. The small shapely head—the lithe body—the powerful tail—the silvery mail with its delicate reflections of pink and emerald—are characteristic of the thoroughbred races who in the struggle for existence are sure to come to the top.

Man never is but always to be blest. We should have been content with our success, and gone home. The wind by this time had risen to a gale, so we drew the boat ashore, and lunched in a thicket of ancient birches, whose

weird and fantastic arms were being tossed by the hurricane—like those of the damned spirits in Gustave Doré's Dante. By-and-by the wind moderated a bit, and we ventured out. We caught two or three more of the silvery herring-like half-pounders, and then the big fish of the day dashed at the fly. We saw him before he touched the hook, for he sprang almost out of the water as he went at it. Callum and Alister declared that he was a ten-pounder at the least. And he ran as few ten-pounders run, with a dead steady pull on the line which we were powerless to check. The men had to keep the boat's head to the wind, for the waves were like to swamp us, and we were too far out to land. We played him very carefully and craftily, for his uncanny and unaccountable proceedings had indicated from the first that something was wrong. At last he began to tire, his black back came to the surface, and the mysterious movements were explained. *He was hooked by the dorsal fin!* He had missed the fly in his headlong leap, but it had caught him by the back as he passed. We kept him steadily to the surface of the water till he was quite spent, but we never could bring him—try as we could—quite within reach of the landing-net. He had got to windward of us, and Callum, who was now alone at the oar (Alister being ready with the net), was nearly powerless against the gale. The heavy coble made no way, the waves broke viciously over us, and then—without any warning—the line suddenly slackened, and the bare hook was flying overhead. It had cut its way through the fin, and the fish was loose. Even after the hook had come away, the big fellow lay flat on the surface, too exhausted to move. Then sinking

leisurely into the invisible depths, he passed away from our gaze, and we saw him no more. Over the misery of that moment we must draw a veil. It comes back to us even yet in an occasional nightmare.

We have said little or nothing about the green and gold and azure, and purple and crimson, and lilac and orange of our Atlantic sunsets. Are they not written in the Chronicles of Sheila of Styornoway and her sisters? Mr William Black has used up all the colours on our palette, and the public will excuse us if we keep to black and white. But in justice to one exceptional night, we really cannot be quite silent. The sunset had been nearly as gorgeous as Mr Black could have made it; and now it was dark, and we were brewing a tumbler of extremely weak whisky and very boiling water before going to bed. Then

the landlord came in—it was about eleven o'clock, the last day of June or the first of July—and told us that the sky was “just remarkable.” We all sallied out to the pier at the back of the house. The picture was indeed perfect. The whole of the western sky was aflame with brilliant orange. Heaven and earth were luminous with the light. Most luminous above the horizon, it faded away at the zenith into lilac mist. The sea was brilliant as the sky, and between the two lay a belt of deepest purple—the Ardnamurchan range. Without this imperial cincture the picture would have been fine,—the dark dividing line gave it the finishing touch of excellence. One sees the “after-glow” in Switzerland and elsewhere, but as a rule it comes directly after sunset: here it was long past midnight before the glory waned.

THE VOTES OF CENSURE.

THE session of 1884 will probably be known to history as the Votes of Censure Session. Already, before Whitsuntide has come and gone, and while the note of the cuckoo is still heard in the land, have three such votes been discussed and decided in the two Houses of Parliament; and it needs not much prophetic discrimination to foresee and foretell the submission of at least another such vote to the judgment of Parliament before the close of this memorable session.

It may not, then, be useless or disagreeable to our readers if we endeavour succinctly to gauge the meaning and the effect of those votes which have already been arrived at. Rightly understood and properly appreciated, they disclose the true relations actually subsisting between the Government and Parliament, and between the two branches of the Legislature and the country; and never since 1784 has a more startling or critical combination of such relations been presented to public attention.

Then, as now, the subject-matter of contention was connected with our empire in the East; then, as now, the House of Lords espoused one view, the House of Commons the other; then, as now, the House of Lords represented the real mind and sentiment of the constituencies and the country; and then, as now, the hostile majority of the House of Commons dwindled on successive occasions, till on the 8th of March it was reduced to one. The dissolution which followed vindicated by its result the course pursued by the House of Lords; and we enter-

tain no manner of doubt that the country, if appealed to now, would sustain the vote of censure passed by the Peers on February 12th. Why do we say so? The elements for forming a judgment are twofold—those which are to be found in the House of Commons, and those which are observable in the country. When Sir Stafford Northcote moved the first vote of censure he was supported in the debate, but opposed in the division, by both the leaders of independent Liberalism (so far as any shade of Liberalism can be called independent in this Parliament), Mr Goschen and Mr Forster; and he received the help, both in the debate and in the division, of the Parnellite section of Irish politicians. In a House of 578, the Government majority was 49 on the 19th of February; in a House of 583, that majority had fallen to 28 on the 12th of May. Whence so marked and great a change? In the interval between those dates nothing had been left undone by Mr Gladstone to bind together the discordant sections of the Liberal party: the most sweeping, and at the same time the most simple—according to its authors—Reform Bill ever heard of, had been not only introduced, but read a second time by the overwhelming majority of 130; the fussy and noisy band of Metropolitan agitators had been conciliated by the introduction of the Home Office measure for the extinction by extension of the City Corporation, and by absorption of the Metropolitan Board of Works; overtures of the most barefaced character had been made, appar-

ently with success, to the Irish Nationalists for the grant to them of political supremacy in Ireland in return for their general support at Westminster; the Scotch had been gratified by the promise of a Bill creating a new Scotch official; and the Humanitarians and the wire-pullers of the Caucus in the great towns had been assured that the Merchant Shipping Bill was to take its place on the Statute-Book before the end of this glorious session. More than all this, Mr Gladstone had informed the country, through the medium of a halfpenny post-card, that if the Opposition dared to obstruct his beneficent course of legislation by fresh motions about Egypt, they should be punished for their factious temerity by the freedom of the comments which an indignant and impatient ministerial majority would hurl at their devoted heads. Under these circumstances, on the 12th of May Sir Michael Hicks Beach rose to move his temperate and well-conceived Vote of Censure in an equally temperate and well-considered speech, which has greatly raised his already high position in the House and in the country. Acting on tactics which experience had recommended, Mr Gladstone, brushing contemptuously aside the blundering amendments of half-a-dozen well-meaning supporters, at once met the motion with a direct negative, in a speech as void of argument and dignity as it was full of hair-splitting chicanery and passionate invective. The judgment pronounced upon it was instantaneous and instinctive; men did not require time to read or study it, and the verdict then given in the lobbies was ratified next day by the country, and subsequently by Europe. Probably in no quarter of the House was the

feeling of disappointment and indignation stronger than on the Government bench, and many a Minister listening next day to Lord Hartington's more temperate and argumentative apology, must have regretted that the main defence had not been entrusted to him. Of the debate, it is not our intention to say much. In it the non-official supporters of the Government were nowhere, while the severest condemnation of their policy proceeded from men of the highest standing and reputation on their own side of the House. Mr Laing, whose knowledge of the East is varied and of long standing, was the first to throw the weight of his experience and judgment into the adverse scale; and when his powerful indictment was followed by the passionate eloquence of Mr Cowen, the rugged and incisive denunciation of Mr Forster, and the calm but decided condemnation of Mr Goschen, every one felt and knew that, whatever might be the numbers in the division, ministerial incapacity and cowardice had been branded by the contemptuous reprobation of the House of Commons. In fact, the very majority which saved the Government from defeat represented only a minority of the House; and if to the minority who supported the Vote of Censure be added those English and Irish Liberals who, by absenting themselves without pairing, and on no ground of illness or other unavoidable cause, showed that they agreed with the motion, the majority would have been reversed, and the House of Commons would technically, as well as morally, have given expression to the undoubted feeling and judgment of the country. The reason of these abstentions is not far to seek, and it deserves serious consideration.

In former numbers¹ we have directed attention to the peculiar position occupied in the House by Mr Goschen and Mr Forster, and have stated our conviction that on the Liberal benches they are the two most powerful statesmen after Mr Gladstone. On this occasion they held the fate of the Government in their hands; and had they announced their intention to supplement their speeches by their votes, there is no doubt a sufficient number of Whigs would have followed them into the lobby, if not to turn the majority into a minority, at least so largely to reduce it as to deprive it of all semblance of a victory. That being so, it is worth while studying a little the apparently inconsistent course of those eminent men. It will be remembered that last year, in the debates on the Transvaal policy of the Government, they jointly attacked its miserable submission to the Boers, and its shameful abandonment of the loyal natives to their buccaneering oppressors; and it was therefore without surprise that at the beginning of this session, when a similar policy of helplessness and indecision in Egypt was subjected to Parliamentary discussion, the House listened to weighty speeches from them in condemnation of the inconsistency and vacillation which had led to such deplorable results in the Soudan. Each orator, however, had then a separate and distinct reason to give for separating his vote from his speech. Mr Forster assumed penitence and amendment on the part of the Government, and solemnly absolved them for their past offences on their implied pro-

mise not to repeat them; while Mr Goschen, less easily deceived, contented himself with announcing that he would vote for a Government whose Egyptian policy he distrusted and condemned, lest, by not doing so, he might be helping to bring Lord Salisbury into office. And thus the majority of 49 against the first Vote of Censure included those eminent men. Mr Laing also on that occasion, for reasons which, with frankness bordering on audacity, he explained in the recent debate, gave his vote to the Ministry. This short reference to the previous conduct of the statesmen in question is necessary to a clear comprehension of the moral to be drawn from their speeches and conduct on Sir Michael Hicks Beach's motion, and of their present attitude towards the Government and the Liberal party. In February all three voted with Ministers, though Mr Forster and Mr Goschen had spoken against them. In May, Mr Laing voted as well as spoke against them, while his two colleagues abstained from voting. That Mr Laing was right, and that they were wrong, appears to us indisputable; but that they refused to repeat the vote of February, marks a clear and decided change in their attitude towards Mr Gladstone and his administration. A speech in condemnation followed by a vote of acquittal has been succeeded by a speech in condemnation unrelieved by a vote of acquittal; and the almost inevitable conclusion is, that on the next occasion, probably not remote, the speech of censure will be followed by the censuring vote,—and then

¹ See "Failures," 'Maga,' September 1883, and "From St Stephens to the Guildhall," December 1883.

the dumb, angry, frightened, and outraged Whigs will have found their natural leader in the person of Mr Goschen. This appears to us one of the most important probable results of the recent struggle.

The position of Mr Forster differs from that of Mr Goschen. He believes in the perfectibility of human—even of Irish—nature, and looks to an extension of political power downwards as in itself a blessing and a boon. If, however, we may judge from his reply to the Bradford caucus, some doubts are beginning to beset him as to the advantage to the State of a highly democratic franchise, wielded and directed by an ignorant and despotic caucus. The passage in which those doubts find expression is so pregnant with meaning that we give it in full:—

“There are dangers even in progress—yes, and even in progress to better things—and by far the greatest danger in that increase of the numbers of electors which you and I struggle for, believing it to be a great and most necessary reform, is this, that as the numbers of electors increase, party management may become more exacting, and party discipline more strict, and independence of thought and expression, which are the conditions of freedom, may be fettered and endangered.”

Is it too much to hope that, having demonstrated the unreasonableness of the censure passed on him by the Bradford caucus for his refusal to give a dishonest vote in favour of the Egyptian policy of the Government, Mr Forster may be encouraged by the approval of all honest and impartial Liberals to go one step further next time, and back his opinion by his vote?

It is, we are convinced, a great mistake to suppose that the Whigs have lost, permanently, all power in the Liberal party. Deceived,

consciously or unconsciously, by Lord Hartington in 1880, they have in the House of Commons remained leaderless, and, for the most part, voiceless during the last four years; but as the conduct of so many Peers of their connection, and the pages of such organs as the ‘*Edinburgh Review*’ and the ‘*Scotsman*’ abundantly testify, their scheme of policy and their views of Government still exist; and should a leader of Mr Goschen’s calibre and qualifications be found to marshal them, they will be found ready to follow him. Indications of a certain though fluctuating cohesion among them have been noticeable on several occasions: on the Irish Land legislation few and faint; on the Bradlaugh controversy more marked and lasting; on certain agricultural questions clear and decided; and now on the Egyptian fiasco, culminating in the abandonment of Gordon, visible, if not audible, to all men. What then is the composition, and what the numerical force of this section of the Liberal party?

Speaking roughly, we should answer the first question by saying—it is composed mainly of the territorial Whigs, now no doubt a much reduced body, recruited to some slight extent by the more staid and conservative members representing law and commerce on the Liberal benches—as an illustration, we cite the names of Fitzwilliam, Grey, Russell, Lambton, Stafford, Kingscote, Dundas, Torrens, Creyke, Cartwright, Muntz, Norwood; and the second, by assigning to them a voting power of between 25 and 30. But a glance at the names given above will show that their power in the country is not to be measured by their numbers in the House. Every one

knows the strength imparted to the Liberal candidature—especially in the north of England—in 1880 by the support so freely and so foolishly rendered to it by the historic Whig families whose names we have placed at the head of that list; and every one knows that if it be withdrawn at the next election, many a Radical member who now flouts his timid Whig colleagues will be withdrawn likewise. That process has, indeed, already commenced; and with the secession of the Duke of Cleveland, Lord Grey, Lord Zetland, and others from the ranks of Northern Liberalism, went a year or two ago the important seats of North Durham and North Yorkshire.

It rests, then, primarily with Mr Goschen to save the remnant of the Whig party from absorption into one or other of the great contending forces by placing himself at their head. Such a party, led by him in the House of Commons, and by the Duke of Argyll in the House of Lords, would at once become a power in the State, and render inestimable service to the country; but should he decline the task, it is almost certain that the process of absorption to which we have referred will go on, and many a Whig now seated uneasily behind Mr Gladstone will either retire at the dissolution into private life, or follow the example set by so many Peers, and latterly by Sir E. Watkin, Sir J. Ennis, Mr Marriott, and Mr M. Guest, and join the ranks of that party in whose supremacy they see the last and only chance of preserving property and ordered freedom at home, and ensuring honour and respect abroad. We can fancy some poetical Whig addressing Mr Goschen in the words addressed by Mr Smythe to

the late Lord Morpeth after his defeat in the West Riding—

“Gentle sir, gentle sir,
More Whigs would there be
Under banners like thine
And with leaders like thee;”

and so addressing him in the conviction that if he failed them, there would speedily be no Whigs left to enlist under his or any other Whig banner.

Great, however, as has been the effect of the divisions on these Votes of Censure on the position of the Government in the House of Commons, and seriously as they have diminished its administrative and legislative power, we have yet to consider their influence on the relations existing between the House itself and the country on the one hand, and the House of Lords on the other.

After the last division there will probably be not a few thoughtful Radicals willing to admit that the small majority of 28 did not represent the mind and convictions of the people out of doors. The significance of that fact cannot be exaggerated; for if it be true that with respect to their principal achievement in foreign policy, in which they have been engaged for nearly two years, and in which they are likely to be engaged, according to their present methods and rate of progress, for at least a decade, Mr Gladstone and his colleagues are out of harmony with, and have lost touch with the constituencies, what confidence can they feel in the rest of their foreign policy finding more favour in the public mind? If the country withholds its support, as it unquestionably does, from their conduct and management of imperial affairs in Egypt, what security have they that a more favour-

able verdict is being pronounced on their policy in Central Asia, in the Transvaal, in Zululand? The whole Mid-Lothian platform, so far as foreign and colonial affairs are concerned, is trembling beneath them; and the people, who have discovered to their cost and disgust the hollowness of the promises of peace and non-interference in the flagrant case of Egypt, will not be slow to pierce through the flimsy disguise of spurious sentimentality, which made way for Russia in Central Asia; abandoned Affghanistan; capitulated to the insolent Boers in the Transvaal; and handed back Zululand to bloodshed and anarchy.

It is not too much to say that these two divisions in the House of Commons, taken together, show, 1st, that the Government, in its management of the Egyptian problem, has no longer the confidence of the Commons; and, 2d, that the House, by giving a majority, however small, to the Government on May 13th, misrepresented the constituencies and the country.

Such, then, being the relations between the Government and the House of Commons, and the House of Commons and the people, resulting from the Votes of Censure in that House, it only remains to consider the position now occupied by the House of Lords, and its relations towards the House of Commons and the country.

To appreciate that position and those relations rightly, the decision of the House of Lords on the Vote of Censure at the beginning of the session must be first considered. By a majority of 100, not consisting exclusively of Conservative Peers, but containing such names as Essex, Fitzwilliam, Fortescue, Dunraven, Poltimore, and Romilly,

the House of Lords placed on record their deliberate condemnation of the Egyptian policy of the Government, and by so doing became the real and true exponent, as the result shows, of the national judgment and verdict. While with halting steps, doubtful accents, and dwindling majorities, the Lower House has been rather refraining from condemning than approving the conduct of Government, the Upper House at once, boldly, and decisively purged itself of all complicity with Ministerial vacillation and inconsistency in Egypt, and by so doing placed itself in the van of popular opinion. Beyond all doubt, it is the House of Lords, and not the House of Commons, which by its vote now represents the predominant sentiment of the English people on the great question of the day. The great increase of political authority thus acquired by the Peers is too obvious to require argument, and it is equally obvious that it is acquired at the expense of the House of Commons. As the influence over public opinion of the latter House declines, so does that of the former grow. Nor is it with respect to Egyptian affairs alone that since the opening of Parliament, four months ago, the House of Lords has taken a wise and salutary initiative. It was in response to an Address to the Crown, moved by Lord Salisbury, that the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor was appointed; and it was to the prompt action of the Duke of Richmond, and the firmness of the Peers, that an efficient measure for the protection of our flocks and herds from imported disease has been passed. Thus, in spite of the desire of the Government to minimise the authority by minimising the initiatory labours of that As-

sembly, the House of Lords occupies at this moment, in the eye and estimation of the country, a position which contrasts very favourably with that into which the House of Commons has fallen.

It only remains for that august body to be true to itself, to act as its predecessor acted a century ago, to believe that it as really, and far more consistently and permanently, represents the mind and judgment of the country as, and than, does the House of Commons, and it will find the people rallying round it as they did in 1784. The country for four years has been governed by words and phrases, and has discovered the truth of the Roman satirist's words :—

“Dicendi copia multis
Et sua mortifera est facundia.”

What it wants is leadership, guidance, government : it has failed to find those qualities in the present Administration, and failing to find them there, it turns its gaze anxiously elsewhere. The fatuity of Ministers, and the consequent disorganisation and weakness of the House of Commons, have combined to transfer the hopes of the people to the House of Lords, and to that political connection with which the House of Lords is historically identified ; and great indeed will be the national disappointment, and irreparable the imperial loss, if from any misplaced diffidence or want of public courage that Assembly should at the coming crisis fail in their *devoir* to an expectant nation, and shrink from plucking the flower, safety, out of the nettle, danger.

A VOICE FROM THE EAST ON ORIENTAL QUESTIONS.

(TO THE EDITOR OF 'BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.')

[WHILE we are unable to concur in some of our correspondent's conclusions regarding the policy which ought to be pursued in Egypt, we do not wish to qualify the high authority with which he is entitled to write on Eastern affairs. The Ottoman Empire has never had a more faithful servant or stauncher champion; and if his views of British policy have a Turkish colouring, they are not the less valuable as reflecting the feelings of the inner circles of the Porte.—ED. 'B. M.']

As a rule, it is not sufficiently borne in mind by the general public that when a question arises in the East, with a political bearing which may affect home interests, it must not be judged by the ordinary rules of logic, or by the reasoning and deductions which would, in the Western world, serve to elucidate and analyse any analogous subject, and to fathom its depths and tendencies. The peculiarities and special character of all intercourse between Christian States and Musulman Governments (not less than that of foreign residents with the natives and authorities) are such, that special knowledge, and peculiar application of various and varying rules and methods of action and argument, are required to obtain practical issues on a given subject, be it commercial, financial, political, or private, according to circumstances, and according to the men to be dealt with for the time being. Those who have lived in the East have constant occasion to remark how deep-rooted are the wrong impressions and prejudices about the customs, laws, and habits of life in the Eastern world. Though so often talked about at home, and so frequently visited by tourists and writers, the East still seems to be so imperfectly known and so very superficially studied, that one is struck

with amazement in listening to reports and queries, and in reading accounts and statements respecting things which are utterly foreign or unknown to the regions concerned. These can only be compared to the parallel opinions and ludicrous views of *unlettered* Moslems of those distant regions where they, in their turn, discuss Western manners and customs, or our modern civilisation and its views and effects.

Thus the errors and imperfect judgments so commonly prevalent with respect to the present Anglo-Egyptian crisis, may be explained by the simple fact that it is unreflectingly regarded from preconceived standpoints, and that the arguments used to discuss the question all proceed from ordinary methods of analysis and criticism, quite inapplicable to the special character and difficulties inherent in the subject itself. When Mr Gladstone, light of heart, propounded his famous "bag and baggage" theory, it would have surely strained even his great talent to put his Radical suggestion into a practical form. It may have sounded well at a moment of great popular excitement, under exceptionally sensational and highly coloured reports of revolting horrors and cruelties; but had prompt action in the sense of such

"tall talk" been demanded from the Liberal leader, it would have been impossible for him to have carried out his idea without creating a chaotic disruption of social ties, and of all international security and order. It is now but too painfully evident that when the present Government undertook the pacification of Egypt, they also did not sufficiently bear in mind that the East is, *par excellence*, the land of surprises. No sooner is one question solved there, by working upon the peculiarly elastic and yielding materials of which it must inevitably be composed, than it rebounds with all the force of its inseparable connexity with some other question, which had been unperceived in the anxiety of dealing with the first phase of the threatening crisis; and so one after another the links in the chain of complication reveal themselves, each requiring separate treatment, and all entailing difficulties intricately bound up with vexatious consequences spreading over vast areas of vested rights and conflicting interests, strong with stubborn, inert resistance. All precedents point to the conclusion that it is specially characteristic of our Liberal Cabinet to deal with foreign affairs, not after a plan of action digested with careful study of ultimate results of vantage or cost, but by simply handling them, as they crop up, by a method of "peddling and patching," which leaves matters much in the same condition as at first, with only the addition of an ugly eyesore, tarnishing our moral prestige, and damaging our national influence and our real interests.

It is therefore scarcely to be wondered at that under her present Ministry the policy of England in Egypt has been, and cannot cease to be, a gigantic and fatal error from beginning to end. The Gladstone

Government started to play the part of a Don Quixote in Egypt on two points. The first was to maintain on his throne the present Khedive, whom they gratuitously claimed, without any apparent necessity or sufficiently weighty political reason, to have appointed themselves, but who in reality is named by the Sultan, his only legitimate suzerain—his Majesty at the time, perhaps too graciously, yielding to the general wish of the European Powers that a change should take place in the government of Egypt. Hence, as a matter of fact, all the Powers were politically more or less interested in the appointment of the new Viceroy. Secondly, the British Government professed to aim at securing the safety of the high-road to India, which, rightly or wrongly, was imagined to be endangered by the revolutionary state of Egypt; while we have yet to learn that the legitimacy of this desire has ever been resisted or challenged by any Power, or by the Egyptians themselves, at any moment since the creation of the Suez Canal. Now, as to the first point, it seems pretty obvious by this time that the present Khedive is but a weak if well-intentioned person, who began his semblance of a reign under British auspices in a manner irritating to his own subjects, by giving all lucrative appointments to foreigners (not always with due reference to their relative abilities); by refusing promotion to his own officers; by showing throughout a strong inclination to quash the not unnatural idea of "Egypt for the Egyptians"; and by thus giving proofs in every instance of decided incapacity to govern the province himself, and of utter inability to prevent his new patrons from misgoverning in his name, and so

bringing odium and ridicule upon both nations. That a man like Mr Gladstone, whose dearest platform principle was "Nations for nationalities," should have so nipped in the bud the rising aspirations of the Egyptian people, seems quite incomprehensible, unless we admit the fact that he also was ignorant of the rights of the question, or that he judged it from a prejudiced point of view, as is sometimes his wont. Arabi Pasha was, we may admit, perhaps a fanatic, unfit in many ways for the part he undertook to play in the "Comedy of Errors" which his ill-judged violence first produced, and afterwards caused to be continued under the force of these very circumstances which we did not rightly comprehend, and consequently could not wisely control or direct to salutary ends. But that there was then a strong patriotic or reforming feeling with an influential class in Egypt, nobody can doubt or deny; and our mistakes and heavy responsibility have all arisen from the infatuation of not recognising it, of assuming it to be only revolutionary and disorderly, and of treating it as such with too high a hand. Had that dawning and incipient feeling, testifying to an advanced stage of moral progress, which it is always sought to inculcate, in words at least, upon the Eastern populations, been fostered and wisely guided, there would never have arisen in its place that irritation and enmity caused amongst the Egyptians by seeing themselves, after a solemn promise of better things, almost daily elbowed out of all participation in the government of their own country by such hybrid foreign institutions as dual control, arbitrarily interpreted and applied, and a summary assumption of supreme power, as offensive to their religious

persuasions as it was objectionable, in form and practice, to their revered and highest ecclesiastical and civil authorities, including the Sultan and his viceregal representative. The bombardment of Alexandria while the Conference was sitting in Constantinople was another very grave error, for if it was apprehended that the British fleet would be molested while lying at anchor in the harbour, why did it not go to sea for a short time, or until the decision of the Conference was made known? and if it was necessary to destroy any new battery or threatening works in course of construction, it could have been done with a single vessel (the main body of the fleet being always in readiness in case of the other forts opening fire), without the necessity of a shell being thrown into the town of Alexandria. It may be well here to mention a fact perhaps not generally known or believed, that our newly elected pet at the time, the young Viceroy himself, signed the order to resist the British ships, his excuse being, poor weak creature, that he was forced to do so!

As to the security of the Suez Canal, surely England, with her mighty naval power and other means, need only have taken temporary possession of the passage, with an openly declared frank statement of her reasons, the weight and legitimacy of which no one would have thought of denying. Even the pugnacious M. de Lesseps would, no doubt, have been only too happy to have found himself and his works under the protecting wing of the English, for the moment, at all events. The question naturally arises, Then why did England bombard Alexandria? Why did she send a military expedition to Egypt, or an insufficient

one, as it has proved to be in the end? Was it because at that moment the Gladstone Government was tottering on its pedestal? Was it to gain popularity with the bondholders? Was it from jealousy of France? Was it to obtain ultimate possession of Egypt for good and all? Mr Gladstone's professions belie all these suppositions, but are his professions to be relied on? and if so, what was his policy? It would be a difficult task for a very clever man indeed to say what he is aiming at, or where his ambition, irresolute and temporising as it has proved itself to have been at every turn, may lead him and the country, unless he is stopped in time to save our national honour, to protect right principles from scandalous violation, and our fair name from irretrievable obloquy and derision abroad. The fatal errors which the Government, in its blindness as to future complications, is repeatedly making with regard to her relations with Turkey, result in producing every day some new cause for irritation between the two countries. One example was in the case of Lord Dufferin's mission to Egypt. The choice of his lordship as ambassador to the Sublime Porte was, by all who knew him, regarded as singularly happy, and fraught with hopes of a satisfactory return to the traditional good relations between England and her old ally Turkey, on account of his Excellency's great talents, conciliatory manner, consummate tact, and firmness of character. Doubtless he has always had in view the steady maintenance of friendly relations with the Sultan and his government; and to send such a man to Egypt to superintend the spoliation, if not the entire appropriation (apparently, at least), on

the part of England, of the finest province of the Turkish Empire, to make him the mouthpiece of humiliating conditions offered to Turkey in the event of her being admitted to take a part in the maintenance of order in an integral portion of her own territory, was neither fair to Lord Dufferin, in his very delicate position of Ambassador to Turkey, nor beneficial to those to whom he is accredited, and whose habit has been to lean principally upon the envoy of England as an adviser and friend, and whom now they naturally can only regard with suspicion and distrust. And this came immediately after a wrong impression had been allowed to go abroad in the public mind that Lord Dufferin had purposely, with a diplomatic cunning and astuteness quite incompatible with his character and position, dragged on the negotiations for the military convention until they could no longer have any reason for coming to a termination. This impression is most erroneous: moreover, the Porte never refused to take a part in the military operations; but when invited to do so, the offer to send an armed expedition to act with the English forces was coupled with such humiliating conditions and restrictions as to the part to be taken by the troops of the acknowledged actual sovereign of the country, that it became absolutely impossible for the Sultan and his advisers to comply with the English proposals without such a loss of prestige and dignity as would have been hopelessly damaging to the Caliph's position in the eyes of the whole Mussulman world. As one proof of this, it is only necessary to refer to the orders given to the officers commanding the British men-of-war and the forts on the Egyptian

coast, as to the course they were to pursue in the event of the appearance of Turkish chiefs or troops. One of the conditions alluded to may be mentioned as an example. It was to the effect that the only part of the coast where the Turks should be allowed to land was to be the exposed shore lying between Alexandria and Port Said—a coast where, during at least half the year, so heavy a sea runs, that landing troops is out of the question. When the Turkish Government, at the practical suggestion of its naval commanders, naturally asked, “What shall we do should it be blowing so hard as to make a dead lee-shore of the proposed landing-place on our arrival off the coast? Can we seek shelter either at Port Said or at Alexandria?”—the answer was, “Certainly not; you must go to sea, and wait for fine weather!” A nice prospect for Turkish ships with troops on board, and that in their own waters too! It is true that about the time of the battle of Tel-el-Kebir the severity of the conditions was somewhat modified, but even then in a way which rendered them impossible of ready acceptance; besides which it was too late. The theory therefore that the Porte, when invited to take part with us in the pacification of Egypt, neglected to profit by the occasion, and thus forfeited for ever any right of future interference in quelling the revolt in its own province, is utterly false, and is a strained argument, conveniently used to cover a disgraceful slight, not only of common courtesy, but even of practical political tact and foresight.

So much for the offence given by England to Turkey. Now let us see how the British Government have slighted, if not insulted, the other Powers in Europe. A Con-

ference was called together, at which ambassadors, and others whose names are renowned in European diplomacy, met at Constantinople to inquire into and agree upon the wisest course to follow respecting the disturbance in Egypt. Lord Dufferin was the British representative, Count Corti was its president, and the Turkish Government was represented by two of its best diplomatists. The assembly sat almost daily in solemn conclave. Meanwhile, what does England do? Having got rid of the French fleet and the much-dreaded French intrigues for a time, the English Cabinet treats the Conference it had called together with supreme contempt; bombards Alexandria on a most unreasonable pretext, thereby encouraging or provoking massacre, incendiarism, and confusion; marches its troops against the weak fanatical forces of Arabi; snuffs out what had at least a semblance of a national movement for freedom which might have served some useful purpose under proper management; established firmly on a throne propped up by British bayonets the weakest ruler that ever held the post of Viceroy, —in short, commenced a system of ill-considered, undignified, and illegal rule in a province belonging to a friendly Sovereign. The fruits of such folly, most naturally, slowly but surely ripened into a condition of hopeless dissatisfaction and confusion. The Conference sitting at Constantinople, seeing with annoyance and astonishment what was going on, and what was likely to come, thereupon quietly melted away into thin air, and has never again been heard of. The rude treatment has not been forgotten, however, and the day may not be far distant when such conduct will bear still bitterer fruits in

more than one direction where our interests are engaged, and where we may not be able to defend them without the goodwill and friendship of those we have so unceremoniously offended. See, for example, how shy all the foreign Powers have shown themselves of our invitation to another Conference, when England in her difficulty calls for assistance in dealing with the financial question in Egypt. See how, in pretending to accept the invitation in principle, they seek to keep aloof from all share in the fearful responsibilities we have so foolishly brought upon ourselves, and which threaten to overwhelm our power to cope with them, unless by so supreme an effort that we may writhe under and suffer long from their weight and consequences. It is fearful, again, to think what a cry of indignation and disgust will rise from every British breast if gallant Gordon be sacrificed to the blind vacillating policy of the Government regarding his chivalrous (if rash) mission, and its so far abortive and perhaps ultimately fatal result. I do not purpose here to enter into any minute study of the Soudan complication, but it may be confidently asserted that, notwithstanding the undignified efforts of the Government to lay the blame of that disastrous entanglement upon the shoulders of its favourite Khedive, it might have been averted by timely firmness in advice, and that it is only one of the deplorable consequences of the generally unsuccessful line of action of the British authorities in Egypt receiving their instructions from Downing Street. Influences of various kinds may sometimes precipitate action which mature reflection would have rendered less rash, and this is more especially

the case when, as with the present Ministry, there is ample ground for a belief abroad that it does not know precisely what it wants. The foreign policy of the Liberal party leads one to believe that it has no fixed aim except that of obstinate self-assertion, and to this idol British interests have, we fear, been largely sacrificed. England is paying the price of popular government. Fortunately the remedy is contained in itself, and can in emergency be promptly applied. But to return to our immediate subject. It is a disheartening task, and really like looking into a fog where all is darkness. Every traveller coming from Egypt says—"Words cannot express the chaos into which affairs in Egypt have lapsed, and it is impossible to tell of the hatred and scorn which is openly displayed towards everything English in a country where a few short months ago our name was a safeguard and a household word." Nor is it only in Egypt itself that the untoward results of such a short-sighted policy has made itself felt.

Half a century has not elapsed since the treaty of 1841 was made, which established the condition of things in Egypt upon a solid footing, and that was the happy result of our traditional national policy,—to uphold the integrity and independence of Turkey. Nothing has warranted a departure from that line of action, nor has Turkey forfeited the right of expecting that we should consistently and honestly carry out our so oft-repeated assurances of friendship towards her. Mistakes have been made certainly, but they have been dearly paid for; and among them we cannot find one which gives evidence that there has been, on the part of Turkey, at any time a policy radically opposed to England's views and just

interests in the East. The balance of power, which received so grievous a shock, and has been generally affected by the fatal consequences following on the lost weight of France in the European concert, have not unnaturally brought about a certain change in the intricate component elements of the whole Eastern question; but the political relations between England and Turkey have not changed in such measure as to call for the antagonistic policy pursued since the accession of the Gladstone Cabinet after the Russo-Turkish war, during which we lent a helping hand (but too sparingly lent it) to Turkey in her struggle with her powerful neighbour. And here it is perhaps going rather away from my subject, in a certain sense, to make allusion to the events of 1870-71; nor is it my purpose to enter at present into any deep analysis of the results flowing from the memorable Franco-German campaign. But, taking general facts as they have disclosed themselves, and without discussing the special reasons for the line of action adopted by our Government during and since the conflict between the two neighbouring countries (*both* our friends and allies), I may be permitted to hold that the consequences of that terrific contest bear out the theory that there must inevitably be a solidarity and inextricable connection between all the interests of civilisation in every disturbance of the established order of things. After Sedan, when we could have stepped out to forbid the further humiliation and weakening of our national ally, it was the English Government who neglected the opportunity for saving Europe from the fearful ordeal it has gone through, and which it has yet to undergo as one consequence of our absten-

tion from acting a generous and chivalrous part, ensconcing ourselves under cover of the fallacious and selfish view that we were not directly concerned in the greatest contest of modern ages. We could then have insisted on the struggle ceasing with the attainment of the object for which Germany so loudly declared she had let loose her dogs of war; but a Liberal Government preferred to remain an unmoved spectator of a political tragedy, the upshot of which we since have seen has not been without some serious consequences to ourselves. Without the siege of Paris and the mutilation of France, Russia could never have come to San Stefano, nor Bismark firmly taken the place of supreme arbiter of the political destinies of Europe. The fearful social crisis which now so sorely tries Continental states, and has been allowed to infect, in a measure, even our own country, could not have been produced, as the unwholesome outcome of the gigantic armaments of the Powers, which squander the vitals of the people in keeping up threatening costly armies on a war footing, on the illogical principle that it is with the aim to enforce peace amongst the nations. By this curious contradiction, which the simple man of the people cannot comprehend otherwise than as a tyrannical grinding hardship from its immediate effects upon his condition, the lower classes have been roused to assert their rights by violence and by occult means. The galling inordinate strain upon the economic status of modern society in general throughout the civilised world, has thus produced the menacing crisis which could, at least in a great measure, have been averted by less selfish and aggressive, or more high-principled and far-seeing policies with the

Governments of the countries alluded to, and when we could have lent the weight of our moral influence, and our material aid or opposition, with a due regard to future consequences. The bonds of International interests are nowadays so closely interwoven by the effects of scientific improvements, intellectual progress, and better understood mutual necessities and sympathies, that it is not possible to separate them, or to assume isolated positions in any general question. I have said above that we too sparingly lent our help to Turkey in her heroic resistance to Russian aggression and spoliation. Still we may claim to have then in a measure prevented the utter collapse of the Ottoman Power by some subsequent assistance at the Congress of Berlin, and the veto we induced Europe to adopt with us against the inordinate exactions of the treaty of San Stefano. Since the Berlin Treaty, however, we have under another Liberal Government almost undone all the good previously accomplished in a spirit friendly to Turkey, though at the same time we are maintaining (as the Government imagines) a wholesome conservative policy for our own interests, commercial and political, in the Levant. In fact, the Gladstone Cabinet has, *to the Eastern mind*, appeared to be animated by a spirit of antagonism and blind hostility to the very existence of Turkey as an independent power; and it must be allowed that the violent utterances of the Premier, when in opposition, not unnaturally led them to that opinion, in a general way. That diffidence and apprehension should have arisen in the governing mind at Constantinople cannot, therefore, be wondered at, or criticised with severity; for the mild statesmen of the East,

untutored in the intricacies of popular government, cannot always master the delicate points of difference between the rantings of party leaders in opposition and the policy of the same European statesmen in office.

But is it too late, one may ask, for the Government to recognise their errors, and frankly seek that co-operation from the Sultan which, we may be sure, would not be withheld, if demanded with proper forms?

To govern Egypt according to the spasmodic decrees of Downing Street is an impossible task. The surest test of experience has been applied; and the conviction must have come to every thinking mind that the elements, as yet, are wanting amongst the native population wherewith to form a stable administration on advanced self-government principles. How, then, it may be said, is the British Government to obtain those guarantees for the maintenance of peace and order, without which it cannot think of bringing to a close the present occupation, unpalatable as it is alike to ourselves, to the Egyptians, and to the Porte? Our answer to this is—By strengthening, in a rational, practical, and legitimate manner, the bonds which connect Egypt with the Ottoman Empire, and not by loosening them; by recognising in action, and not words alone, the Sultan's sovereign rights as caliph and suzerain; and by making the Imperial power, in this sense, in the vassal province, a reality and not a fiction which encourages the disaffected, creates intrigues, and fosters corruption.

Egypt, the reader should recollect, is a thoroughly Moslem province. It is a stronghold of Islam, and in the hearts of the people the unnecessary or superfluous

foreign "employés," who are there trying to learn the art of governing them, have no recognised standing. Purely Western institutions are not in harmony with their instincts; and an Administration founded solely upon such lines will never take firm stand, however long it may be forcibly maintained by the bayonets of an alien soldiery. Now that, in its abortive attempts to improve Egyptian institutions, the Gladstone Cabinet has brought them all to the ground; now that all the ties which kept the Khedivial policy together have become so slackened that they will not answer to the slightest strain, and paralysis and collapse are the distinguishing features of Cairo rule, nothing but a Government of a more or less oligarchic, that is to say, paternal character, can bring back to Egypt its ancient prosperity and peace. Such a Government, oriental in its colouring, to suit the ideas of the people, might be easily established if the British Government, instead of sending its scientific experts to Cairo to carry on disastrous experiments in their game of governing foreign races, would only admit the legitimate suzerain of the country to work with it to the desired end. Once the administrative plan had been decided upon by a preconcerted amicable understanding between the British representatives and the Sultan, the British Government might confine its action in Egypt to watching, in a friendly spirit, that there should be no departure from, and no violation of, the rules set down. A backbone of force would, of course, be necessary; and this should be given to the Government not by the ruinously costly maintenance of only foreign and Christian garrisons, but with the

aid of the presence of a few regiments of picked Turkish soldiers. Where men of courage as well of skill are wanted to fill administrative posts, they can be found and chosen, in a certain proportion, amongst the inhabitants of other parts of the Sultan's dominions. There are plenty of good honest men in Turkey, although the public at home have, I am sorry to say, been taught to think otherwise. Let those, however, who would know the truth on this important point, inquire of Mr Foster, the Director-General of the Ottoman Bank, or of Mr Lang, the manager of the Tobacco *régie*, Mr Collas of the Ottoman Lighthouse administration, or any other gentlemen who have had Turks employed under them, what their experience has been. I am aware that much of what I am saying will be very unpalatable to many in England, who have been pinning their faith on newspaper reports; but it is no less the simple truth.

This brings me now to a subject on which I must appeal to the public sense of justice and fair-play. I must protest against the indiscriminate employment of the word "Turk," whenever there is occasion to mention any case of misgovernment, oppression, or cruelty in Egypt. It will probably surprise the reader very much to hear that, speaking generally, there are few if any Turks in that country. If proper inquiries were made about these so-styled Turkish Mudirs and Turkish soldiers, who are so often referred to in terms of indignation and opprobrium, it would be found that they are mostly Egyptian natives; and although some few may have a dash of Turkish blood, from a former generation, as part of their inheritance, they have nothing in com-

mon with the Turk, as he is understood in England, except their Mohammedan faith. Very different are these men to those who serve the Sultan in the European or Asiatic provinces, and it is unjust to both that they should be indiscriminately confounded in name. Turks there were in Egypt in the time of Mehemet Ali. Their presence and service was the essence of his strength; and it was with their assistance that he built up his power, and was able to bequeath a principality to his descendants. It was the policy, however, of his successors to get rid of this Turkish element or reduce it to a minimum in the government of the province, seeing in it one of the strongest ties by which Egypt was bound to Turkey, and consequently a great obstacle to the achievement of that independence which the heart of Saïd, as well as that of Ismail, so strongly longed for. It was a mistaken policy. The Turk, with his well-known fidelity and courage was set aside, and the Fellah, with his subtlety, unscrupulousness, and cowardice came in, leading to the advance of Arabi Pasha, the bombardment of Alexandria, the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, and all the other evils with which the land of the Pharaohs is now again afflicted, and for which England will in history be made to bear the onus and the disgrace, unless by following the spirit of the national proclivities and tastes, she stops in time, and retrieves her fair name by generously admitting the errors so far committed, and by at once adopting the remedy which will bear out her professions of friendly intentions, while consistently acting with due regard to her acknowledged just interests.

If a Conference should meet, as it seems possible, but by no means certain, what is to be its

basis or theme of discussion? The English Ministry, with almost oriental astuteness, qualified, however, with somewhat of transparency, declares that it is to be only the financial aspect of the question. Surely no special knowledge is required to comprehend that the financial question must embody, and means really, the general administration of Egypt, even to its minutest details. One of the shrewdest men in diplomatic history has said—"Give me sound finances and I will insure you sound politics!" Thus while apparently purposing to deal only with the subject submitted to the Conference, England would seem to be striving to obtain conditions which would virtually give her control over the destinies of Egypt, for no half measures could be admitted. These have, unfortunately, been but too abundantly tried, and have failed. Either the greatest injustice and political iniquity of the century (barring that of the French taking possession of Tunis under the falsest of pretexts) is about to be committed by England, or England must say to Turkey: "I have done my best in my own interests and yours to establish order in Egypt, and I find I cannot succeed in doing so as quickly and as well as I wished, so I now again call upon you to co-operate with me, by your influence with your co-religionists, and if necessary with your armed forces, for the attainment of the common aim; and when tranquillity is restored, I will respect your sovereign rights, and, in accordance with my promises, withdraw my forces from Egypt. The experiences of the past, brought about by untoward circumstances, may prove, let us both hope, beneficial not only to all interested in the welfare of Egypt, but

“also in maintaining the good feelings which have always existed between the British and the Mussulman races throughout the world, where our common interests must work harmoniously on their respective grounds of legitimate action for mutual advantage and satisfaction.”

The true interest that England has in Egypt is the maintenance of order, and not the prompt repayment of usurious loans. The country must be tranquil in order that no unforeseen events should threaten the safety of the Suez Canal, as the most important link of all in the chain of England's communications with India. There are two dangers to which the peace of Egypt is exposed,—internal dissension, and the restless ambition of foreign Powers. The plan I have suggested is by no means a new idea, and at one time was evidently the ruling principle of the English Cabinets as regards Egyptian policy; for Lord Granville is found writing to Monsieur de St Hilaire, in 1882, as follows: “The tie which unites Egypt and the Porte is, in our opinion, a precious safeguard against foreign intervention.”

It is obvious that any permanent occupation of Egypt, or its forced submission to British rule, even if unopposed by the other Powers, would prove as much a white elephant for England as Algiers is to France. It is true that in the case of the latter she makes Algiers a sort of nursery for her army, but even in this respect it has not proved of much avail, so far as experience has shown, to the present requirements in warfare between civilised troops and savages; and, moreover, Egypt could never be of use to us in the same sense. The only plausible reason for England's professed interests in Egypt is the safety of her road to India; and

this is, in fact, the only ground on which she can pretend to have a leg to stand upon, while contemplating annexation or a protectorate. But considering the many means by which she could, with less sacrifice of reputation and money, secure that object, one cannot help suspecting that jealousy of French influence, and of French preponderance in the management of the affairs of the Canal, are the cause of the secret apprehensions of the Liberal Cabinet, and of its present bombastic attitude. It must be remembered that, thanks to the Liberal Government, the purchase of the Canal shares has not had the anticipated result of increasing British influence in that quarter, while better handling of the position would probably have secured it; and it is to be presumed, therefore, that it was considered necessary to take other steps to attain the object in view. It cannot be conceived that a Liberal Government in England can contemplate achieving this object by doing violence to the fundamental principles of its policy, so far as to attempt annexation, and thus prove itself to belong to the same school of politics as those who have always been the subject of its severest censure.

But there is another essential point to be considered in speaking of the remedies to be applied in order to undo the mischief threatening our position with respect generally to our interests in the East, and especially to those we are most immediately concerned with in the valley of the Nile. I am aware that it is always distasteful to have to overthrow the idols we have worshipped, but “la raison d'état” carries everything before it; and however unpleasant the task may prove, however galling to our pride and humiliating for our powers of discrimination,

we cannot avoid listening to the unanimous voice of the unhappy Egyptian people which loudly clamours in our ears, that the choice of Tewfik was a most disastrous mistake. True our ill-advised Government has committed itself, and in a certain sense drawn the other Powers, to defend and uphold him on his throne; but this is a case where the welfare and progress of several millions of human beings are concerned, and if in those views, no less than in that of the general interests of peace and order, it was considered advisable to effect a change before, the same important necessity must force similar action again. Nor could the upshot be worse whatever happened, for the present situation is quite untenable. The Viceroy must be changed. It will doubtless be a bitter pill for England to swallow; but she is too great, too powerful, and too generous not to accept the sacrifice in such a cause when proved to be indispensable. The difficulty of finding a successor would not be great. For example, there is one—the nearest heir to the throne, according to the ancient law of succession—who, in my opinion, would ably fill this important post. His name is well known in Egypt and to the European Powers—I refer to Prince Halim, who is directly descended from Mehemet Ali, and who is living in a kind of honourable exile on his property on the Bosphorus, after having, through the unhappy combinations of the political situation in Egypt, been more or less arbitrarily deprived of a fair portion of his possessions in his own country. His birth and former high position there naturally force upon him a difficult part, which he has striven, so far as it has been in his power, to avoid—that of a pre-

tender; but at no period can it be said of him that, like others in such tempting circumstances, he has ever used them for creating difficulties or disturbance in the way of those whom his partisans are directly interested in styling usurpers of his legitimate place on the Viceregal throne. Highly educated, intelligent, imbued with liberal principles, unprejudiced, and with truly patriotic feelings in an enlightened sense, Halim, when in Egypt, had around him all those who appreciated his many bright qualities, and who considered that he would be the “right man in the right place,” if unfortunately, in their opinion, the law of succession did not at that time exclude him for the moment, and the influences and intrigues of his nearest relatives did not combine against him. Of modest and retiring disposition in all matters relating to his personal actions, he resolved, for the sake of peace and tranquillity, both for himself and his country, to withdraw from all temptation of engaging in a contest which any other man less disinterested would have pursued. Those familiar with the ways of the East, particularly in dynastic questions, and with the means of which Halim could have disposed, must give him credit for considerable moral courage and resignation under such circumstances. It is no secret that his political leanings are British; but at the same time, they are free from blind partiality, and his general character, as evidenced by what has been said above, would be an insurmountable obstacle to any attempt to force him into any line of action which, in his opinion, he might consider unwise, undignified, or not in harmony with his duties to his country, his position, or his faith. Notwithstanding his having been

the victim of spoliation on the part of his family, with a view to reduce him to subjection and make him powerless against them, he still possesses sufficient wealth to satisfy his modest habits and tastes. Unlike other Eastern princes, he has been bred in the salutary ways of order and economy; and without mean parsimony, he abhors lavish squandering of public or private wealth. The husband of one wife, he is a loving father, and occupies his leisure time in carefully watching the education of his children, whom he brings up in sound ideas and civilised modern principles, striving to avoid the exaggerations of the newfangled fashions which, misunderstood by the would-be advanced elements in young Turkish society, have made a large proportion of the modern generation the hybrid products that we see nowadays, possessing all the vices, and none of the qualities, of the Europeans, while they have set aside the many good points of the oriental type and character. If I thus enter into details apparently irrelevant to the subject which prompts this article, it must be understood that, looking at things with the eye of several years' experience of Eastern ways, habits, and men, I wish to lend my feeble efforts in doing away with some at least of the prejudiced notions prevalent in my own country as concerns the East, and which, in my humble opinion, if allowed to pass unchallenged, may work still greater mischief than that which they have unhappily, both with our statesmen and in public opinion, been influential in bringing about. I should consider myself wanting in the discharge of a conscientious duty in my position of an English gentleman living in Turkey, and holding high military rank with the Turks, if I did not at least try to let my

voice be heard in the general unjust, mistaken, and ungenerous concert of blame so unsparingly and injudiciously lavished upon them, and which is inspired by ignorance and culpable indifference as to the real truth and the proper means for discovering it. I am aware that I am rashly attempting to contend with deepest notions, traditionally inculcated by the antiquated teachings of bygone times, so difficult to eradicate from the public mind. But if due allowance be made for the march of intellect which has, perhaps slowly but not the less truly, shown itself in the East, as well as in the West, all those who have had opportunity of witnessing the changes which half a century of closer intercourse with civilisation have produced, in a moral as well as in a material sense, in the countries and the people I have learnt to appreciate and esteem, will agree with me in the belief that if free scope be allowed to them to work out their destinies, unhampered by unjust aggression, and aided by fair admission of their legitimate rights, if the grasping hand of Europe be withheld from violently seizing upon coveted territory to which it has no title, and if England will, with due regard to good faith as well as her own interests, assist in those objects, there is yet a fair and brilliant future in store for the lands of the East.

Political necessities may conveniently be referred to by statesmen to palliate the errors they commit in favour of a ministerial policy which sacrifices a national policy; but national sentiments cannot be violated with impunity, and sovereigns, as well as individuals, have a natural right to justice and fair-play. I would here, therefore, beg to add a few remarks upon the erroneous judgments

passed so unreflectingly upon the present ruler of the Turkish empire. It seems to me that fair allowance is not made in sufficient measure for the unfortunate circumstances and difficulties under which the present Sultan has had to carry out the heavy task of government. It may fearlessly be declared that, with any other people less docile, less devoted to their sovereign, and less blindly attached to their faith, it would be beyond the power of any mortal being to rule the Ottoman Empire. Having come to the throne after the most tragical and painful occurrences in his own family, the present Sultan had at once, and without preparation, to meet the severe trials which followed a disastrous war, the loss of territory, internal dissension and misery, and all the consequences of previous errors which became part of his inheritance. Quick to perceive his critical position, his Majesty determined to take matters into his own hands, and to get rid of the men of the old *régime* on whom he could not place reliance, and surround himself by younger officials, who had been his companions in his secluded life as prince, and in whom he believed he could place implicit trust. But if more faithful to him than the others, these new men had little experience of the intricacies of administration, rendered still more difficult by the circumstances of the time, and the antagonism of the officials, whose jealousy was roused and whose illicit sources of profit were cut off by the concentration of the governing forces at the palace under the watchful eye of the Sultan himself. Thus the whole weight of administration fell upon his Majesty, who, conscious of the deplorable state of things, applied himself energetically to what he

considered to be the first duties of the State, namely, the general welfare of his people, the abolition of abuses and corrupt practices in every department of the Government at home and in the provinces, the strict carrying out of the stipulations of the treaties with foreign Powers, the equal distribution of justice, &c., &c. In the midst of numberless difficulties, thwarted at every turn, sometimes by those he trusted, and by the jealousy of foreign Governments, seeking to take advantage of the weakened condition of the country for their own ambitious purposes, we have seen the Sultan, nevertheless, scrupulously accomplishing his political obligations, even where the other parties to the compact neglected to respect their share of the reciprocal engagements. This is but a plain statement of historical truth. All or nearly all the conditions binding upon Turkey have now been carried out, and all who have had the privilege of approaching his Majesty Abdul Hamid II. cannot fail to be impressed with the conviction that he is not the man to stop when once he has determined upon a course he considers the right one to follow. I, for one, shall acknowledge myself much mistaken, if the Sultan, having accomplished the most arduous part of his task, will not then apply himself to carrying out those reforms, both radical and superficial, which he has so often asserted, in official as well as in private form, are absolutely required to place his country in the position it is designed by nature to occupy, to which it is his Majesty's most ardent desire to restore it, and to which, amidst all his other numberless anxieties, he gives the most earnest study. It will not be difficult for him, when he sets about it, to weed the

state from hornets and parasites ; and, in his mild, kind, courteous way, he has sufficiently given it to be understood by all around him and throughout the Empire, that in working resolutely and conscientiously for the welfare, progress, and enlightenment of his subjects, he will not be thwarted in his object, and will crush unsparingly all those who may oppose him. Of course there will be many and hard difficulties to overcome, and a certain time must elapse before such results can be attained, and it would be unfair to expect that, under the circumstances, miracles should be accomplished any more in Turkey than elsewhere. It is indeed a marvel, when all things are impartially considered, that within comparatively so short a space of time, and with such crippled and insufficient means, so much should have been already accomplished. For it must not be forgotten that it is barely a quarter of a century since the Ottoman Empire took its place amongst the family of nations, and I challenge the world to tell me what country, whilst going through the fearful crises Turkey has traversed during that brief period, can pretend to have achieved as much as she has. We must at times look back a little in all fairness, and if we did so we should be astonished at the changes that have occurred even within our own personal memories and experiences.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words with respect to the mistrust that has grown up

in England of the Sultan's Government and its action. I am very much afraid that his Majesty is unjustly suffering for an offence for which he is in no way responsible, seeing that it occurred in a previous reign. I refer to the suspension of payment of the interest on the public debt. The present Sultan in the midst of a thousand difficulties has steadily endeavoured to repair this error, and, at the cost of great sacrifices to the revenue, he effected two years ago what by all unprejudiced minds must be considered an equitable arrangement under the most trying circumstances. His own people suffer in order that the foreigner may be paid, and it is very hard that a sovereign who has always loyally striven to meet his obligations, and to promote the welfare of his people, should be so completely misunderstood, and so ungenerously treated and judged. That his Majesty feels deeply the harshness of this treatment, especially at the hands of the British nation and Government, whose goodwill and friendship his personal inclination, not less than his national interests, prompt him to desire, may be confidently asserted ; and in the face of this fact, he would be more than human if the action of the British Government, in all the circumstances I have related above, did not embitter those feelings, and sometimes sway him to exhibit his want of confidence in diplomatic promises, come from whom they may.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *May 16, 1884.*

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